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New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 33 *(continued)*

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. Londoño (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish):* Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on your election to the Presidency of the General Assembly at this session. We are assured that with your experience and skill you will guide our work with great success.

I should also like to congratulate Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana for his excellent performance as President of the forty-eighth session. As President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Insanally conducted the debate in the Open-Ended Working Group of the Assembly on the Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

Colombia joined in the adoption by the General Assembly of the report of the Working Group (A/48/47) by consensus on 14 September 1994. We believe it is appropriate to continue the debate in the same manner next year. Although some views were expressed on this item, we believe that there is still a long way to go. Colombia's position is well known. First and foremost, we believe that transparency and confidence are essential in this important effort to present to the international community and our own peoples the kind of reform that will truly reflect the democratization of the international system through the elimination of privileges which were created 50 years ago.

The credibility, representativeness and legitimacy of the decisions of the Council hinge on its methods of work and the effective participation and confidence which Member States place in the Council. A Security Council which is isolated from the majority of Members of the United Nations will not contribute to the revitalization of the Organization and the effective management of the crises it has to deal with. We believe that a thorough, comprehensive reform should be undertaken and not simply an exercise to accommodate the interests of a few pre-selected States and an increase in the privileges of others.

While the nature of the inclusion of the developing world in the international system allowed the creation of exceptional rights for some States, the time has come to change this once and for all. We have the responsibility to ensure that the United Nations shall achieve the objectives for which it was created - to promote development and the well-being of all nations in an environment of equality and justice. We cannot continue from the very heart of this Organization to breach the governing principle of international relations, namely, the principle of the legal equality of States.

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In our opinion, there should be a freeze on the category of permanent members and it should gradually be eliminated. Those seats are the result of negotiations conducted in the past which have no validity in our times. Likewise, the veto should be restricted and eventually eliminated. Clearly, the idea of its extension to more members of the Security Council should be discarded.

We believe that the best way to adjust the Council to the new realities is through an increase in the number of its non-permanent members. Similarly, we could agree to re-election of some seats according to the decisions of the General Assembly on a case-by-case basis. Thus the whole membership would endorse those States that had gained the confidence and support of the international community. Clearly, the main criteria would continue to be equitable geographical representation and the equality of States.

While we understand the need for some degree of discretion in the work of the Security Council, it is unacceptable to have all major issues discussed behind closed doors as is the case at present. This weakens the confidence among the Members of the Organization, takes away from the credibility of the decisions of the Security Council and limits their acceptance by Member States. The Council should discuss its items in open debates. Transparency does not limit the effectiveness of the Council.

There should be formal briefings by the Security Council for the benefit of Member States. In addition, there are other mechanisms stipulated in the Charter that could promote ongoing communication between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

A subsidiary organ of the General Assembly created in accordance with Article 22 of the Charter could contribute to the formulation of Security Council decisions and receive information before decisions are adopted. Such a subsidiary organ could likewise enlarge the application of certain Articles of the Charter, such as Article 11.

The chairman of such a subsidiary body, who could be the President of the General Assembly or one of the Assembly's Vice-Presidents, could be invited to participate in the formal and informal meetings of the Security Council. Thus the President or Vice-President would ensure channels of communication and also ensure that the recommendations of the Member States are appropriately reflected in the Council's decisions.

The dynamic of the Working Group has shown that simplistic solutions should be discarded, that the expansion of privileges for a minority is not acceptable, and that the new system which may stem from this exercise should recognize the fact that democratization in international relations is a reality which should be appropriately reflected in the United Nations over the next 50 years.

Mr. Flores Olea (Mexico) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The General Assembly has before it today document A/48/47, which contains the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council, established under resolution 48/26 adopted last year in this very Hall.

My delegation wishes to thank for his hard work the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group, your predecessor, Sir, in the post of President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, and also the Vice-Chairmen, the Permanent Representatives of Finland, Ambassador Wilhelm Breitenstein, and of Singapore, Ambassador Chew Tai Soo. Thanks to their efforts, progress has been made in this difficult exercise.

Throughout the year there was a productive exchange of views, which made it possible to pinpoint the major problems that we face in the sensitive task of adapting the Security Council to the new era, so different from that in which the Council was created.

In accordance with the approach taken by resolution 48/26, the Open-ended Working Group should pay equal attention to increasing the membership of the Security Council and to other matters, particularly the Council's working methods and its relationship with the General Assembly. This is not a mere numerical exercise; rather, it concerns the principal organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security in the face of the challenges of a world very different from the one in which it came into being.

My delegation has supported the need for a thorough reform of the Council, and we repeat our conviction that such reform cannot be confined to satisfying the aspirations of the new economic Powers. That would mean failing the international community, and we would justify the greatest criticism of the United Nations - that it often looks after the interests of the great Powers. It would also mean weakening the universality of the United Nations and fostering a lack of confidence in it; the

resulting disillusionment and criticism would be all too understandable.

The international community deserves to have a legitimate and effective Security Council. These two conditions demand a truly representative organ, reflecting the current situation, and working diligently and vigorously.

In this framework, some hold the view that the number of members of the Council determines its ability to act and that therefore any increase would have negative effects. We do not believe that that is the correct approach. A majority of countries claims that, within manageable limits, Security Council membership should be increased in order to make the Council more representative of the regions - Asia, Africa and Latin America - which traditionally have been particularly underrepresented.

It is often forgotten that, under the Charter, the Security Council has no authority of its own. Strictly speaking, the other 169 Member States have delegated to the Council specific responsibilities and authority with regard to peace and security. For this very reason its composition must reflect the growing membership of the United Nations.

Let us also recall the Council's responsibilities towards the General Assembly; we are the organ that conferred on the Council responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The first Charter mechanism to link the two organs is the annual report that the Council has to submit to the Assembly in order to keep Member States duly informed on the way in which the Council is discharging its functions.

Unfortunately, in practice this substantive obligation has been transformed into nothing more than a belated formality, with little content. Last year we were fortunate enough to have a timely report and, for the first time in almost 50 years, it was presented personally by the Council's President - Ambassador Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg of Brazil that month - whom we again thank.

We thought that an excellent precedent had been set. Regrettably, that does not seem to be the case. This year we are again experiencing the delay to which we have become accustomed.

Furthermore, despite our insistence, the Council's report has been treated as a mere matter of procedure, when the mandate given in the Charter relates to a substantive, reasoned and amply explanatory document. A substantive report of the kind we are proposing should include, among other elements, the matters being considered by the Council, the specific conditions under which they were brought before it, the considerations that were taken into account when adopting decisions and the results achieved.

One of the objectives of the Working Group is to introduce greater transparency and democracy, and therefore greater effectiveness and legitimacy into the work of the Security Council, which was never conceived as the closed preserve of only a few States. Several proposals have been made.

My delegation repeats that we believe there must be a summary report of informal consultations; a rapporteur might be the right mechanism. In any case, wider publicity should be given to the consultations between the President of the Security Council and the various regional groups. Another improvement would be the establishment of a system whereby members of the Council reported to their respective groups on matters under consideration by the Council. Greater communication between the Security Council and States affected by its decisions is urgently required.

These procedural reforms do not require amendments to the Charter. They could be incorporated gradually into the practice of the Council or else into the final rules of procedure that its Members would eventually have to adopt.

Regarding the necessary increase in the membership of the Security Council, Mexico believes that there is no justification for the inclusion of new permanent members. The specific weight of certain countries in the international community cannot be disregarded, but this in itself does not warrant granting them exceptional privileges, such as the right to be members of the Security Council for an indeterminate period with extraordinary and disputable prerogatives, especially in a constantly changing world that aspires to true legal equality among States.

We acknowledge the wishes expressed by certain countries, and after careful consideration Mexico is inclined to go along with the idea of an expansion of the membership of the Security Council comprising new, non-permanent members and, in due course, others with an extended mandate or with the possibility of more frequent rotation. The selection of those non-permanent

members or of those serving on a rotation basis or with an enlarged mandate would first and foremost be decided upon by each regional group.

The decision-making process in the Council is subject to the assent of its five permanent members. We know that this privilege, granted in San Francisco to the victors of the Second World War, paralysed the Council in the days of the cold war, and for almost five decades prevented it from acting effectively. But we are now living in different times. In the last four years, we have seen a reduction in the exercise of the veto. This new situation is encouraging and it is precisely for this reason that we can ask ourselves if the time has not come to correct some of the political necessities of 1945 and their distortions.

There was a flagrant contradiction in the Charter from the very outset: despite the fact that the United Nations was to be founded on democratic principles, the political reality of those times made it necessary to grant a certain privileged, and in a way irregular status, to five of its members. It was said that the veto would oblige those Powers to take a unified stand and thus reach clear-cut agreements. However, it soon became apparent that the veto not only did not ensure such unity of views but that it in fact made it possible for the Powers to maintain their differences and defend their own interests without making any real efforts to have their views converge.

Mexico has always opposed the veto because it runs counter to the principles of democracy and the equality of States before the law. Moreover, rather than making it less difficult to reach agreements among the nations it fosters differences and confrontation. But the exceptional circumstances that gave rise to the veto at the end of the Second World War have now, fortunately, been overcome. My delegation maintains that it is not possible to revive artificially the conditions of the past, or to repeat the errors imposed by a political situation that no longer exists, by granting the veto to possible new members of the Council. To accept this would be to contradict once more the very foundations of the Organization. Nor is this all: it would once again present the States and the international public at large with the spectacle of the United Nations as an organ more interested in protecting the interests of a few Powers than in attending to the urgent needs of the international community, particularly when economic capabilities are invoked as the main reason for being elected. Neither the United Nations nor the Security Council can be compared to the board of directors of a business. Nothing would be more degrading for the prestige and image of the United Nations than artificially to revive non-democratic arrangements to accommodate the wishes of only a few countries.

We repeat that it would be desirable to eliminate the veto, while recognizing the difficulty of this idea, because it seems unimaginable in *realpolitik* that any of the five permanent members would be sufficiently disinterested - and the clear-sighted - to recognize the political requirements of today and to give up that right. Such fantasy can only feed our illusions but can go no further. None the less, we should not unnecessarily repeat the errors of the past.

We should aspire to regulate the use of the veto by the current five permanent members, whose number - I repeat - should not be increased for any reason. In this connection, we were encouraged by the proposal made before this Assembly a few days ago by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia, Mr. Gareth Evans, namely that we gradually dilute the veto by requiring that, in order for it to be valid, at least two of the permanent members would have to agree to block the decision of the Council.

At the San Francisco Conference, in 1945, Australia also proposed that the veto not apply in cases involving the exercise of the Council's mandate under Chapter VI. This would be in keeping with the spirit of the Charter, granting the five permanent members the exclusive responsibility of adopting sanctions under Chapter VII without the possibility of paralysing the Council's efforts to find a peaceful, negotiated solution in accordance with Chapter VI. We believe the time has come to reconsider this proposal with a broad, long-term political vision that goes beyond vested interests.

The decisions of the Working Group will be reflected in reforms of the Charter of the United Nations. The procedure for bringing about such reforms is complex, since it requires approval by two-thirds of its membership, including the five permanent members. That is to say, it cannot be imposed.

Amending the Charter is a two-way street. Without the support of the permanent members of the Security Council, no amendment can enter into force. But the permanent members cannot forget that any amendments they may propose must also have the support of two-thirds of the members of the General Assembly. In other words, to reform the Charter, it is necessary to consider the general interest and not impose pressures or unilateral

demands in order to bend the will of States with greater needs.

Mexico supports the decision contained in the report that the Working Group should continue its work. We must redouble our efforts to make positive strides. With good faith and good will we could arrive relatively easily at conclusions that are shared by all and that would lead to a principle of consensus. But we also understand that in this task we cannot be simplistic. Nor can we just parade decisions, losing sight of the final objective: a substantive reform that will take account of the interests of all and avoid hasty arrangements that satisfy the interests of only a few.

We should not establish any fixed dates or deadlines for the completion of this task. It is now time to negotiate, it is true, but without undue haste. Such amendments well deserve our thorough consideration.

Mr. Lamamra (Algeria) *(interpretation from Arabic):* Allow me first to extend my thanks and congratulations to President Samuel Insanally and the Ambassadors of Singapore and Finland for their wise and effective guidance of the Working Group whose report is now before the Assembly.

The holding at this point in time of a public debate on the question of equitable representation, increased membership and other issues relating to the workings of the Security Council is both timely and important as it affords us all an opportunity to put forward our views and proposals and, at the same time, to try and crystallize the discussions that took place in the General Assembly's Working Group in the light of the ideas put forward at the forty-eighth session and those propounded by Member States in their interventions in the general debate at this present session of the General Assembly.

My delegation's concern that there should be meetings devoted to a discussion of this question stems from our conviction that the procedural decision adopted by the General Assembly at the end of the forty-eighth session to continue discussion of the agenda item within the Working Group during the forty-ninth session should have been supported by a political frame of reference and political guidelines that could be gleaned by the Assembly from the wide-ranging and fecund discussions that took place, particularly, within the Working Group, and which gave birth to some very interesting ideas.

It is in that context that my delegation proposed an amendment to operative paragraph 2 of the decision requesting the Working Group to take duly into account the views expressed at the forty-ninth session, both during the general debate and during discussions on agenda item 33 of the session's agenda.

This flows also from our conviction that the modest progress achieved so far towards identifying the problems, concepts and the methodology to be adopted in dealing with all the issues involved in reforming this major and sensitive organ whose role impacts on international peace and security and is so vital in international affairs, was made possible thanks to our far-reaching frank discussions. The ideal formula for restructuring the Council must be based therefore on an international consensus derived from a wide-ranging, democratic and transparent debate in which care should be taken not to marginalize the developing countries which did not participate either in founding the Organization or in drafting its Charter.

The importance attached by Algeria to the question of reforming the Security Council with them of ensuring equitable representation on the Council as well as the effectiveness, transparency and democratization of that body's deliberations and decision-making procedures, was demonstrated by the pioneering initiative of Algeria, together with nine other Member States, to inscribe on the agenda of the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly in 1979 an item entitled, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council." Since then, Algeria has continued to contribute effectively to placing this vast, multidimensional endeavour in the context of the overall framework of reforming the United Nations system as a whole, and of the Security Council in particular, in a manner that would be compatible with the new realities of the world situation.

With regard more specifically to the Security Council, Algeria submitted a detailed written account of its ideas and approach during the discussions held in the General Assembly's Open-Ended Working Group on equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other questions relating to the Council's workings.

Thus, from the methodological point of view, my delegation opted for a comprehensive approach and expounded its ideas on the basis of two postulates. The first concerned the inequitable nature of the Council's

present composition and its geographical and cultural imbalance. In addition, there is the fact that, given the large increase in membership in recent years, from a purely numerical point of view, the Council does not reflect the Organization's present-day composition. The second postulate concerns the climate created by the end of the cold war, which has given the international community the hope that it could look forward to the emergence of a new world governed by law, an order based on democracy and participation that would opt for consensus in decision-making and that would ensure that this should be reflected in the Council's functioning and procedural working methods.

Accordingly, with regard to the issue of increased membership of the Council, we have focused on the criteria of equitable representation and the logical implication of the need to give priority to seeing that any increase of whatever kind in the number of members should help redress the present imbalance. We have also emphasized the need to abide by the criteria enshrined in the Charter and by the requirement that regional organizations, such as the Organization of African Unity and the League of Arab States, be considered in any attempt to adjust the regional balance and the need to enshrine the principle of rotation in discharging the Council's responsibilities, in keeping with the principle of the sovereign equality of States, just as it is also necessary to take into account the readiness of Member States to shoulder their responsibilities in the achievement and maintenance of collective security.

In this same context, we have frankly and clearly drawn attention to the need to regulate and limit the areas and subjects which may continue to be subject to the veto. We have voiced our principled conviction that the granting of veto power to other Member States would not be conducive to democratization of the Council or make it more effective. To the contrary, such a step would be likely to worsen the imbalances that exist between developed and developing countries and give rise to competition and prejudicial contradictions that could affect the political climate prevailing in the world and within regional groupings.

During the discussions in the Working Group, several delegations were unanimous that reform of the Council's working methods and procedures, involves certain political aspects that cannot be ignored and that, consequently, it would not be reasonable to oppose an equitable increase in the Council's membership under the pretext that the addition of a number of seats would jeopardize the Council's efficiency.

It also became clear that equitable representation on the Council is essential to the strengthening of its political and moral authority and would ensure for its resolutions the respect and voluntary implementation that are necessary for its efficacy. It was emphasized also that there is a need to address the economic and social causes that lie behind many disputes in the world. It is in this context that we should be aware of the importance of the Council's relationship with its environment and its natural partners - the non-members of the Council, on whose behalf it acts - as well as with the other main bodies of the Organization, especially the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and regional organizations and arrangements, which, pursuant to the Charter, have an important role to play in the prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes. Some very useful ideas were put forward in this context with the aim of promoting greater interaction between the Council and its partners on the basis of transparency, cooperation and concerted action.

My delegation has reached the conclusion that it is essential for realism to be combined with ambition in addressing this question, in both its political and its legal aspects, if we are to effect a qualitative reform of the Security Council, that would establish new working methods and safeguard the Council against the blocking of its functioning and against its being monopolized in the service of narrow national interests that would be detrimental to its effectiveness and its credibility.

Accordingly, we have called for an honest reading of Article 24 of the Charter as this would highlight the need to take effective account of the contractual relationship enshrined in this fundamental text, pursuant to which the parties that confer the Council's mandate - all the Member States - have the legal right to exercise political and legal control over the Council's actions and resolutions. In this context, my delegation has stressed that it is high time the International Court of Justice, on the initiative of the General Assembly, was given the competence to determine the constitutionality of resolutions adopted by the Security Council.

With regard to the procedural aspect of implementing arrangements or possible amendments to the Charter, my delegation once again calls for the convening of a general review conference - something for which the Charter makes provision - to enable all

Member States, particularly the new ones, to participate in a rebirth of the Organization.

Our discussions have revealed the sensitive nature and complexity of this question. Finding a formula that would be satisfactory to all may appear to be an extremely difficult undertaking. However, this difficulty should not be used as a pretext to opt out of the necessary transparent and democratic debate in order to replace it by bargainings that serve nothing but narrow individual ambitions. The difficult nature of the task should not dissuade us from continuing our efforts and collective discussions toward the desired consensus on a restructuring formula that would guarantee equitable representation, and ensure the effectiveness and credibility of the Security Council.

Clearly, the world is now in a position to take advantage of a political climate that favours the introduction of meaningful reform of a Security Council, whose structures and philosophy were the products of a particular historical context and of political and military alliances that have become obsolete. So, let us learn the lessons of the past and benefit from past experiences so that we may satisfy the expectations of the peoples of the United Nations, who aspire after a more united world, where the role of the Organization is strengthened on the basis of the principle of the sovereign equality of States.

Mr. Sucharipa (Austria): For the second time in recent years the General Assembly is considering the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

Since last year's debate the Working Group of the whole has had an extensive exchange of views. During the general debate of the current session many heads of delegation, including the Foreign Minister of my country, referred again to the question of reform of the Security Council. We should therefore now be in a position to advance the debate in order to prepare the ground adequately for the necessary decisions, which, in the final analysis, will have to be taken at the political level, as was made clear this morning by the Permanent Representative of Singapore.

On the eve of the Organization's fiftieth anniversary we must ensure that it is well equipped to meet future challenges. A reformed Security Council that can rely on universal support will be of vital importance to the Organization in the decades to come.

Austria's position on this issue is as follows.

First, the basic guideline for the future composition of the Council is the need to ensure its representative character as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of its work. The envisaged enlargement should therefore be limited: the number of additional members should be relatively small. We believe that the future composition of the Council should in any case not exceed 25 members.

Secondly, the work of the Security Council has in the past greatly benefitted from the input of both categories of its members - permanent and non-permanent. Thus the necessary continuity in its work and an appropriate reflection of the international power structure were combined with democratic elements ensuring representativeness and providing fresh ideas for the solution of impending problems. We therefore argue for the maintenance of such a balance between permanent and non-permanent members.

Thirdly, in the debate so far the case has been made for additional permanent members. In our view, the choice of such members must reflect political and economic realities and be based on their ability to contribute financially as well as to the overall peace-keeping efforts of the United Nations.

Fourthly, the future composition of the Security Council should reflect, through an appropriate balance in its membership, the reality and plurality of today's world. In our view, the addition of a limited number of regional seats endowed with rights similar to those of the existing permanent members could meet these requirements.

Fifthly, despite some recent improvements - which we see as important steps - the question of accessible information channels between members and non-members of the Council remains an important one and constitutes an essential part of the discussion on the future composition of the Council. The degree to which Member States feel that they are represented by the Council depends to a large extent on the existing possibilities for interaction with the Council. I listened with great interest to the constructive proposal in this regard put forward this morning by the Ambassador of Brazil.

Austria, as a country with a longstanding tradition in United Nations peace-keeping, has a special interest in closer cooperation and dialogue between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries.

We therefore welcome emerging improvements in this area. In this context, we attach less relevance to the concrete procedure than to the results of such improved interaction. We welcome initiatives which have already been taken in this context and value in particular the initiatives of New Zealand and Argentina. They should be taken seriously into consideration. Improved channels of information are also urgently necessary with regard to problems resulting for any countries from their compliance with sanctions regimes.

Let me submit some considerations on how we might best further proceed in the discussion of the item before us. After this debate in plenary, at an appropriate time the Working Group of the Whole will be re-established. The views of Member States on the issue are by now widely known. We should therefore concentrate our work on concrete issues in the form of a focused discussion. To this end, we could define "building blocks" which might become constituent elements for a possible consensus or for the emergence of positions which might carry wide support. This process could be achieved by a combination of informal discussions within the Working Group, guaranteeing adequate transparency and consultation among interested members.

Among possible elements which need further refinement through this process, I should like to mention a few: a closer indication as to the upper limit of the Security Council membership, bearing in mind that concrete figures will only result from a final agreement on the structure of the composition of the Council; an appropriate identification of principles that will have to be taken into account in formulating the future structure of the Council, such as, for instance, the most adequate relationship in relative numbers between permanent and non-permanent members; possible restrictions in the exercise of the right to veto - here, I should like to refer to the interesting remarks made this morning by the Permanent Representative of Egypt; and an agreement on the types of membership to be envisaged, in particular a further elaboration of proposals to create a new category of Security Council membership in the form of regional seats, including the selection process and the specific rights of these members.

In our view, a discussion of such possible "building-blocks" would help us to narrow the number of possible options and to define possible avenues leading to the large agreement that will be necessary if we want to finalize the ongoing process of constructing a Security Council that will both reflect today's reality and meet the high expectations vested in this Organization.

Mr. Caputo (Italy): I should like first to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. We are convinced that your experience will guide our work with great success.

It is an honour for me to speak on behalf of the Italian Government at this forty-ninth session of the General Assembly on an issue to which we attach special importance: the first real reform of the Security Council since the birth of the United Nations. My country has shown its interest in this subject by playing an active role in the Open-ended Working Group that the General Assembly set up for this purpose last year; and we pride ourselves on having presented a proposal that we judge to be concrete, comprehensive and in the interest of all countries.

Allow me to give a quick thumbnail sketch of our project. We would keep the number of permanent members at the current five, without adding new ones, because recent historical developments have shown that very little is permanent in modern international politics. We would instead increase the number of non-permanent members from 10 to 20. The 10 new seats would be allotted, in turn, to a group of 20 or eventually 30 Member States. The main criteria that could be adopted to identify these countries are already listed in Article 23 of the Charter. The first is their ability and willingness to participate in peace-keeping operations with financial, human and military resources. Let us not forget that the main purpose of the Council is to maintain peace and security in the world. The peace-keeping budget already amounts to three times the regular budget of the Organization and is increasing. The two other criteria listed in Article 23 are equitable geographic distribution and a country's contribution to the other purposes of the Organization. In addition, other criteria could be taken into consideration, such as population size, economic resources and the willingness to contribute to humanitarian causes.

As we see it, the 20 to 30 countries should be subject to periodic review of their performance. In substance, this formula would guarantee the continuous presence in the Council of the current permanent members and at the same time a more frequent presence for 20 or 30 mid-size to large-size countries. Moreover, the larger number of members would make it easier to

redress the present geographic imbalance on the Council. Indeed, after 50 years, it is about time for a new deal.

We are convinced that our project would also benefit the 80 countries that have never been elected to the Security Council and the 43 that have served only once. In fact, as statistics clearly indicate, smaller States have been shut out of the Council by the fierce competition within their regional groups for the few available non-permanent seats, sometimes even despite existing regional agreements. By sheltering these small countries from the competition of the larger ones, we would provide them with greater access to the 10 non-permanent seats with normal rotation. Of course, one might argue in favour of open competition for all 20 non-permanent seats on a basis of absolute parity, but such an arrangement would clearly place the smaller States at a disadvantage, since they would still risk being elbowed out by the larger ones. Finally, we believe that a Council of 25 members would still be able to function efficiently and effectively, as the proportion between the original organization of the Security Council and the future one would be maintained.

We have noted that other interesting and constructive proposals and suggestions have been presented, while many others may be in the pipeline. We welcome them all. In short, we intend to continue to participate in the exercise with an open mind and a constructive spirit, and to work together with other Member States to obtain the widest possible consensus. But we insist that everyone - even the representatives of the smallest countries - be partners at all times in the process, including consultation.

We fully share the view that there are other, equally important issues concerning the reform. In addition to the quest for an enlarged Security Council, there is a compelling need for a reform of its methods and procedures and a thorough review of the Council's relations with the General Assembly, other organizations, and non-member countries. The Council is still operating under the provisional rules of procedure, adopted in 1946. It is high time the provisional rules were made permanent and were adapted to the times in which we live.

It is only natural that the General Assembly, as the embodiment of the membership of the United Nations, should expect thorough and prompt briefings on the Security Council's activities. At present, however, this relationship is limited to a single annual report. This is not sufficient. Countries not members of the Security Council that contribute troops to United Nations peace-keeping operations should, for example, be assured of regular consultation on the conduct of an operation in which the lives of their soldiers are at stake. A consultative mechanism could be set up by extending Article 44 of the United Nations Charter to operations conducted under Chapter VII.

Finally, greater transparency is required in the workings of the Security Council. To this end, we must adopt measures to provide the United Nations membership with more regular information on the debates in the Security Council and on the various positions that emerge thence.

There are two final points that I would like to raise. First, the reform of the Security Council is too crucial an issue to be left to the work of restricted committees. The largest possible number of Countries - including, I repeat, the smaller ones - must be put in a position to participate. Therefore, in order to avoid overburdening small Missions, we suggest that the ad hoc Working Group not meet during the regular session of the General Assembly - that is to say, not before January of next year. Frankly, we should not feel bound by deadlines, no matter how important the fiftieth anniversary celebration may be, because a mistake today might prove irreversible. Therefore, let us not hurry, please. As we say in Italy, "Premature babies are often stillborn."

Secondly, we feel that a consensus must be reached on the principles of the reform before we start singling out the countries that might be eligible for one league or the other.

May I conclude by assuring the Assembly that we shall continue to act in an open-minded and constructive way within the Working Group. We welcome all new proposals, criticisms and suggestions. Our final goal, one which I am sure we all share, remains that of securing greater participation, greater democracy, and greater efficiency and effectiveness for the Council.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia) *(interpretation from French):* Allow me first of all, Sir, on my own behalf and on that of my delegation, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly and on your outstanding leadership of our work.

In addition, it is my pleasure to pay a tribute to Ambassador Insanally, Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council, for his constructive role in seeking

common ground and for his contributions to the process of democratizing the Organization and its organs in order to fulfil the international community's oft-expressed aspirations in the framework of the common effort to establish a more just, more equitable, new international order.

Mr. Chaturvedi (India), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We also wish to salute the unflagging efforts of Ambassador Chew Tai Soo and Ambassador Wilhelm Breitenstein in leading the Group forward, making it possible for it to draw up practical recommendations so that in 1995 we will be able to celebrate the anniversary of a revitalized Organization whose institutions enjoy more equitable representation, transparency and democracy in the decision-making process.

The African Ministers for Foreign Affairs, meeting in New York, welcomed the constructive process seeking to improve the functioning of the Security Council to reflect the new realities of our contemporary world and the contributions made by the countries not members of the Council, particularly the developing countries, in the maintenance of international peace and security. The African Ministers reaffirmed the importance of close and consistent cooperation between the Security Council and the General Assembly. They welcomed the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 48/246 of 29 July 1994, which is a new milestone in the creation of more effective interaction between those bodies, in accordance with the spirit and the letter of the Charter. My delegation has at various times stressed this important aspect of the question to make it possible for the international community to contribute more to the management of world affairs for the maintenance of international peace and security.

We noted with great interest the limited but important initiatives taken by the Council to promote greater transparency in some of its working methods. We urge the Council to continue in that effort to respond to the aspirations of the majority of delegations, as expressed during the deliberations of the Working Group established under resolution 48/26, implementation of which is in keeping with the relevant provisions of the Charter.

The concern over ensuring collective security and allowing members of the international community to participate actively in shouldering the collective responsibility for security, as entrusted to the international community by the Charter, compels us to work together to facilitate the participation of countries not members of the Council in its deliberations. The Secretariat's new practice of convening informal meetings with the participation of some members of the Council, as well as the consultations held with troop-contributors, are encouraging, but could be improved upon and institutionalized.

We are convinced that recourse to Article 29 of the Charter for the establishment of one or more subsidiary organs subordinate to the Security Council has the advantage of allowing the Council to entrust deliberations on issues of crucial importance to those larger bodies. The credibility of decisions taken by the Council would only be enhanced and strengthened.

Furthermore, the proliferation of peace-keeping operations and the experience gained by the Organization and by troop-contributing countries lend force to the idea of adapting the formula of using various types of consultations. Accordingly, we deem very useful the idea of organizing consultations between the Council and interested States before a decision is taken on the timeliness, goals or duration of peace-keeping operations, as well as on the resources for implementing them, in order to give them every chance of success.

This is not an innovation for us, but rather a matter of activating provisions of the Charter, in particular Article 47, paragraph 2, which allows the Military Staff Committee to invite any Member of the Organization to be associated with it when the efficient discharge of the Committee's responsibilities requires the participation of that Member in its work.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) and its member States attach special importance to the role of the Council in the areas of peace-keeping and preventive diplomacy. The African Heads of State reiterated last June at the Tunis Summit their desire to act not only within the regional framework of the OAU to prevent conflicts through the central African mechanism for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts but also through the active participation of African contingents in peace-keeping operations on our continent and in other areas of conflict outside of Africa.

Africa therefore pledges its complete cooperation and readiness to participate in discussions and decision making of the Council. It will spare no effort to help to increase the efficiency of the Council in this area and to

ensure success for the United Nations in the maintenance of peace.

We are convinced that the Working Group of the General Assembly has reached a stage in its deliberations which makes it possible, with a bit more effort, to outline concrete and feasible recommendations with regard to an increase in the membership of the Council and to its functioning. In this context, we wish to recall the position expressed by the Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement stressing the inadmissibility of any pre-established selection. We must carefully apply the provisions of Articles 2 and 23 of the Charter, which spell out the appropriate criteria for and prohibit any selectivity or subjectivity in the allocation of seats, thus asserting the Council's accessibility to any Member State that contributes to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, including the promotion of universal values such as human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as the development of human resources.

One of the sacrosanct principles of our Organization is equitable regional representation. In this regard, we consider that Africa, like Asia and Latin America, is entitled to be equitably represented on the Security Council. I shall take the liberty of recalling the terms of the African ministerial declaration which states that at least two permanent seats should be given to this continent in the course of the current restructuring process. It goes without saying, in our opinion, that rotation continues to be essential, including within regional groups. It is indeed contrary to the very essence of the democratization we are trying to achieve in a Security Council adapted to new realities to offer special status, in rather questionable fashion, to a new category of States or seats.

The delegation of Tunisia welcomes the positive spirit of consensus that has marked the work of the Security Council in recent years. Such a spirit could further enhance the Council's credibility and gain enthusiastic support from the Member States were it consistently reflected by the full, non-discriminatory implementation of all of its decisions.

Consensus should, in our opinion, enshrine the principle of the indivisibility of collective security, confer proper legitimacy on decisions and guarantee their applicability.

In this respect, we would like to encourage the members of the Security Council, and especially the permanent members, to continue actively seeking consensus; as was stressed in the ministerial declaration of the non-aligned countries, this would certainly spare the Council a paralysis resulting from the exercise of unreasonable privileges that are ill-suited to the new spirit in international relations and could threaten regional and international peace and security.

Mr. Insanally (Guyana): My delegation very much welcomes the opportunity which item 33 presents us for reviewing the progress of the Open-ended Working Group, established by resolution 48/26 to consider all aspects of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council. An assessment of what has been achieved thus far and what remains to be done to fulfil the mandate of the resolution will serve to orient our future work with a renewed sense of purpose.

The brief, even laconic report presented by the Working Group to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly does not do justice to the extensive and enlightened discussions which took place on all the issues that arose for consideration. Paragraph 8 is limited to highlighting only such main areas as the question of size and composition of the possible increase in the Council's membership. While recognizing that there was a convergence of views that the Council should be enlarged, it states that the scope and nature of the enlargement would require further exploration.

Admittedly, circumstances did not permit a more comprehensive and detailed account of the Working Group's deliberations. Guided by the principle that all aspects of its mandate are interlinked and must be settled simultaneously, areas of specific agreement could not be listed. Yet it would be a great pity, in the view of my delegation, if the tacit nature of the report were now to invite a return to an exposition of matters already amply ventilated. Were this to happen, we would waste a great deal of time and perhaps lose the unique opportunity we have at this moment to create a more democratic and efficient Security Council.

We would therefore do well to remind ourselves, as we are about to embark on further work at this forty-ninth session, of the primary aim of the exercise in which we are engaged. Clearly, our task is to bring about an increase in the Council's membership that would be more representative of the United Nations today. The present size and composition of the Council cannot be deemed by any yardstick to be equitable now. The Permanent

Representative of Indonesia and Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement reflected in his statement this morning some of the outstanding concerns which we share in this regard.

Thus far, much of our discussion of the question of size and composition appears to have been largely driven by financial considerations allowing for the addition of one or two States to the category of permanent member. Understandably, peace-keeping operations, which are today the main burden of the Council, demand significant resources such as these new members are thought capable of providing. We believe, however, that permanent membership should not be limited only to a select group of major military or economic Powers, but should also be open to developing countries which have a contribution to make to the Council's work. We rather fear, however, that any proposal for additional permanent members may now quickly become bogged down by the question of whether any such new members should have the right of veto.

These aspirants could insist on having the same entitlement as all other permanent members, since anything less may suggest an inferior status. However, in the light of the history of the condemnation of the veto, even of its application in particular instances by the permanent members themselves, it would be reasonable to assume that any suggestion of an extension of the veto could be controversial and lead to an early impasse in the discussions of the Working Group.

Moreover, we do not think that there can be ready agreement on additional permanent members unless there is a concomitant acceptance of an appropriate number of non-permanent members that would satisfy the requirement of a balanced and equitable representation of all States - both developed and developing - on the Council.

As a priority task, some reasonable ratio will have to be found between the numbers of permanent and non-permanent members, as well as any new category of members that may emerge to cater for regional representation on a rotational basis. Such regional representation can conceivably satisfy the interests of larger countries without unduly swelling the ranks of the permanent members. It is important to ensure, however, that no one region is over-represented in terms of numbers of permanent members, and that there is a proper balance among all categories. To this end, the overall composition of the Council must be reviewed to ensure that the principle of equity is fully respected.

Many States have provided, through their written submissions to the Secretary-General and their statements to both the plenary and the Working Group, their several concepts of a model Security Council. Although there are some differences of specification, the principal features of design are common to most submissions, namely, equitable representation, transparency and effectiveness of operations. As far as the question of numbers is concerned, the eventual figure seems to oscillate somewhere between 20 and 25. With these broad characteristics in mind, the Working Group can, I think, now go to the drawing board in an attempt to give shape to the new Council.

As far as the second major cluster of issues is concerned, namely, those relating to other matters, my delegation is satisfied that appreciable progress was made during the last session of the Assembly. The early consideration to be given by this body to the report of the Security Council testifies to the possibilities of the greater communication and cooperation that can exist between these two important organs. The Council has, to its credit, taken several initiatives to make its work more open and transparent. As it continues in this direction, both the credibility and the legitimacy of its actions will be commensurately enhanced. With regard to the question of decision-making and all other matters related to the Council, these are likely to fall into place once the major issues are resolved.

In order to build upon the progress that was achieved at the forty-eighth session, the Working Group will need to find a mechanism for sifting the many ideas and proposals which have been advanced in order to identify those which can be translated by consensus into reality. It will therefore have to go beyond set statements of position to an informal and frank exchange of views designed to pinpoint possible areas of agreement. The use of such a mechanism must, of course, be without prejudice to the integrity of the Working Group, which should remain at all times open and transparent in its functions. Consequently, all matters treated by any auxiliary mechanism must be *ad referendum* to the Group as a whole.

We may also do well at this stage to give some thought to the time frame within which our work might be completed. In its wisdom, the Assembly placed no constraints that would prevent us from giving ample consideration to all the important issues before us. We should therefore not force those issues to any premature conclusion, but rather test them thoroughly for

widespread acceptance. None the less, we should not unduly delay a process which is aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Security Council to deal with the many challenges which it now faces in the maintenance of international peace and security. The sooner this goal is achieved, the better it would be for the entire international community.

My delegation is confident that under Mr. Essy's leadership, and with the able assistance of his two Vice-Chairmen, the Working Group will continue to make progress in the discharge of its mandate. The celebration next year of the Organization's fiftieth anniversary is certain to provide a strong psychological impetus to the process. We would therefore hope that, without being strait-jacketed by any considerations of time, we will work diligently to bring our labour to an early and full fruition.

Mr. Batu (Turkey): The crucial challenge before us today is to make the United Nations a real centre for universal solidarity by improving its effectiveness and by harmonizing its work with the new imperatives of our times. In this context, the focus of attention should be the Security Council, which bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The widespread demands for making that principal organ more representative, responsive, transparent and accountable should be met. The new international political environment requires the democratization of the Council. The Council has to be restructured to reflect the new realities. In order to enable the Council to discharge its expanded responsibilities more effectively, the moral authority of the Council should be reinforced. These are the pressing needs to be met in order to have guaranteed international support in responding to new challenges and threats to international peace and security. It is in line with this understanding that my delegation has actively participated in the first two rounds of the deliberations of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council.

Having taken note of the report on the progress of work of the Open-ended Working Group, we believe that the next stage of deliberations should be held on the basis of concrete proposals. We must build on the work done in the course of the forty-eighth session.

There are mainly two aspects of our work which require equal attention. We have to enhance the representative weight of the Council and democratize its method of work.

Let me dwell on the first point. The enhancement of the representativeness of the Council cannot be confined merely to a quantitative expansion of its size. The modalities of the enlargement should also be elaborated. We do not believe that an increase in the overall number of seats alone will suffice in securing more equitable and representative participation in the work of the Council. The enlargement should be coupled with a fair system of workable rotation. In this context, we firmly believe that the proposal submitted by Italy to the Open-ended Working Group merits careful consideration.

The idea that there is a correlation between the size of the Council and its efficiency is inherently misleading. The determining factor in increasing the efficiency of the work of the Council will be the political will of its members and the support of the general membership, rather than its size. The Council will become more effective when it is perceived by the international community as being more equitably representative of the general membership, and thus more authoritative in its decisions.

The present dichotomy - a Council that is relatively more efficient in its deliberations, yet, in turn, less effective in implementing its decisions - calls for thorough consideration.

It is in line with this reasoning that we endorse, in general, the proposal by Italy. We hold the view that the Security Council should be enlarged by 10 additional non-permanent members. This new membership should rotate among a list of countries. However, this list could be updated after a certain time so that it does not lead to new privileges.

On the other hand, we believe that extending the concept of separate constituencies to the distribution of all elective seats is worthy of consideration. Designating, for each elective seat, separate constituencies representing more or less equal potential and means, as well as a common determination to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, could enhance the representative weight of the Council and ensure more equitable geographical distribution. Setting up new constituencies for election could be one of the most effective ways to rectify the shortcomings and injustices of the present election system.

Along with this idea of radical reform, we could also start thinking about finding ways and means within the geographical groups of ensuring a fair, equitable and workable system of rotation for all the non-permanent seats, including the 10 additional new members. My delegation will present these ideas in written form to the Open-ended Working Group in its new round of deliberations.

Reform of the Council's working methods is the other aspect of our work. I do not wish to go into detail once again on this issue. We have explained our views in the Working Group, and we will continue to elaborate on them. However, I should like to underline that most of the ideas that have been presented to the Working Group in this respect do not require an amendment to the Charter. We believe, therefore, that we could finalize this part of our work more easily. In the same vein, the Council's rules of procedure, which are still provisional after almost 50 years, should be finalized to reflect the spirit of democratization.

Our aim should be to make the Open-ended Working Group a genuine driving force for real reform. We have to create a Security Council that is more effective, representative, transparent, accountable, credible and authoritative. This is a historic task which we must fulfil.

Mr. Azwai (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) *(interpretation from Arabic):* The adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 47/62 on the question of equitable representation on and increase of the membership of the Security Council reflects the extent of the determination of the Members of the United Nations to put an end to the unfair composition of the Security Council. As currently composed and working as it has been, the Council is in need of reform in order to respond to changes in the international situation. On the international scene, new States have emerged, while the role of others has diminished. Moreover, the number of Members of the United Nations, on whose behalf the Council works, has greatly increased.

By its resolution 48/26, the Assembly established a Working Group entrusted with the study of all aspects of the question of increase in the membership of the Security Council, and other matters relating to the Security Council. During the last session, the Working Group held numerous meetings, and the results of its work are contained in document A/48/47. My delegation has perused the contents of that report and believes that the next phase of the Group's work will be particularly important, in view of the fact that it has to submit to the Assembly specific recommendations on the increase in the membership of the Security Council and on reforming its methods of work. In this respect, my country believes that, in carrying out its mandate, the Working Group should base itself on the principle of the full sovereign equality of States. The methodology of increasing the membership should be guided by this principle and not by particular choices or by any specific political, economic or military considerations.

Moreover, my delegation believes that the Working Group should consider the other part of its mandate: the question of the equitable geographical distribution of the membership of the Council, and the correction of the current imbalance in its composition due to the under-representation on the Council of developing countries, especially those of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Increasing the membership of the Security Council and democratizing its composition should be studied as an integral part of the process of reforming the Council and of improving its methods of work, including its decision-making processes and the manner in which its resolutions are adopted. In this respect, my country's delegation would like to underscore the need for the proposed reform to ensure that the Security Council should work within its competence under the Charter and to do so with full objectivity and neutrality, without interfering in the internal affairs of States under pressure by certain States or in response to their wishes. In addition, the Security Council, in order for it to be able to deal effectively with international questions, should not usurp the functions of other bodies or involve itself in questions that fall within the competence of other main organs of the United Nations.

My country's delegation also would like to underscore the need to do away with the factors that impede the performance by the Council of its role in the maintenance of international peace and security, especially the power of veto, which should be eliminated since the reasons behind its granting have ceased to exist. The continued existence of that power would perpetuate the lack of full sovereign co-equality amongst the States Members of the United Nations.

Effective reform of the Security Council and, in particular, the improvement of its working methods, necessitate transparency in the Council's activities. This transparency should characterize also the stage preceding the adoption of resolutions. My country's delegation believes that, to achieve this, the Council should consult

with the countries concerned on the questions of which it is seized. The Council should also consult with the relevant regional organizations. Previous practice indicates that the Council has ignored the need to engage in such consultation. Some of its States members have even refused to take into consideration the views of certain States that were directly concerned with questions before the Council. To guarantee the universal acceptance and implementation of Security Council resolutions, my country's delegation believes that, before deciding to adopt such resolutions, the Security Council should engage in wider consultation - not in the context of informal consultations, but in formal meetings open to all Member States.

In conclusion, my country's delegation would like once again to underline the extreme importance of this question, which is directly related to international peace and security and to relations between nations and peoples. That is why we should take the necessary time and seriously study this issue in order for us to be able to decide on and introduce the desired reforms of the Security Council in a democratic manner that would emphasize the responsibility of all peoples, big or small, rich or poor, strong or weak, in creating a new world of peace and cooperation that will be free from policies of hegemony and influence. The parameters of such a new world should be such that they would engender continued cooperation amongst States and create development and growth opportunities that measure up to the challenges of poverty, ignorance and backwardness and the need to consolidate peace amongst States and peoples.

Mr. Owada (Japan): Over the past two and a half weeks, during the Assembly's general debate, we heard the representatives of more than 170 countries. A great majority of them touched upon the question of the reform of the United Nations, particularly as it relates to the Security Council. This is clear evidence of the keen interest that Member States have in the question of the reform of the Security Council and a manifestation of their political will to achieve concrete results in this exercise. If we are serious in our endeavour to strengthen the United Nations as the centrepiece of the international order that is to be consolidated in the post-cold-war world, it is important that we maintain and even intensify this momentum to move forward on this crucial question during the current session of the General Assembly.

In this post-cold-war era, only through joint efforts of the international community can we sustain and promote world peace and stability. The United Nations is expected to play a central role in this concerted endeavour of ours. It was against that background that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr. Yohei Kono, stated in his address to the General Assembly on 27 September that Japan was resolved to conduct a proactive foreign policy in its effort to assume its share of responsibility and to contribute to the future well-being of humankind on a level commensurate with its political and economic status.

The Foreign Minister expounded the basic philosophy underlying this resolve of Japan in relation to its international responsibility in the following terms:

> "Reflecting with remorse upon the Second World War, Japan has never wavered from its commitment to contribute to world peace and prosperity. Japan does not, nor will it, resort to the use of force prohibited by its Constitution. Japan will remain resolutely a nation of peace. Neither possessing nuclear arms nor exporting weapons, Japan continues to be actively engaged in disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. In accordance with what I have just stated, Japan has dispatched members of its Self-Defence Forces, as well as civilian personnel, to several countries, including Cambodia and Mozambique, in response to requests by the United Nations. Japan intends to continue to cooperate actively in such United Nations peace-keeping operations.
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> "At the same time, Japan is determined to enhance its contributions to efforts on global issues in [such] economic and social areas ... [as] development, the environment, human rights, refugees, population, AIDS and narcotics." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 7th meeting, pp. 12-13)*

It is on the basis of that philosophy of Japan that Foreign Minister Kono stated that, with the endorsement of many countries, Japan was prepared to discharge the responsibilities of a permanent member of the Security Council.

Japan is firmly convinced that the United Nations must be reformed to meet the many major challenges that the world now faces and that to this end the Security Council must be reformed to render it more reflective of today's world and to enable it to respond more effectively to the growing expectations of the international community. In particular, the Council will have to be

restructured to reflect the new realities of the world, where the membership of the United Nations has dramatically expanded and where new global Powers have emerged with the will and the capacity to carry out greater international responsibilities. Needless to say, the very purpose of the reform of the Security Council is to enhance the effectiveness of that organ. It is incumbent upon all of us, therefore, to exercise our utmost care to ensure that the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council are not jeopardized as a result of our attempt to effect reforms.

If the United Nations is to play a more active and effective role for the maintenance of international peace and security, as we believe it must, reform of the Security Council is without a doubt the most urgent task now facing the Organization. From that viewpoint, my delegation is gratified to note that the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council has conducted extensive and intensive discussions on this crucial question since the beginning of this year. The Working Group submitted its report to the General Assembly at its previous session, and the Assembly has now decided that the Group should continue its work during the current, forty-ninth, session of the General Assembly. In the light of the discussion held thus far and on the basis of that report, I wish to offer a few salient points which should guide our future deliberations within the Working Group, so that we may make further progress on this all-important question.

As a basic framework of our future endeavour, it is imperative to build upon what we have achieved in the course of our discussions within the Working Group. A large number of Member States have actively participated in the deliberations of the Working Group and expressed their views and positions upon all the pertinent aspects of the issue. As a result, I believe that there has emerged a consensus on the point that, in view of the paramount importance of the Security Council, the reform efforts should be directed towards enhancing its legitimacy and credibility so that it can function truly effectively as the executive organ of the United Nations entrusted with the primary task of maintaining international peace and security.

More specifically, it would seem generally agreed that a genuine effort to reform the Security Council will have to be pursued in two directions: reform of its organization and reform of its functioning.

First, with regard to the question of organization of the Security Council, it is noteworthy that there has been a convergence of views in the Working Group on the need to enlarge the membership of the Council. In considering how this might be done, my delegation believes that it is essential to address the following three fundamental aspects:

> the emergence of new global Powers, which prompts us to envisage a limited increase in the number of permanent seats in addition to the current permanent members;
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> the drastic expansion of United Nations membership, which requires us to consider an appropriate increase in the number of non-permanent seats to improve the representativeness of the Security Council;
>
> the imbalance that has emerged in the geographical representation within the Council, which suggests that we should redress the overall distribution of seats.

Secondly, with regard to the question of the functioning of the Security Council, issues such as improving the transparency of its work, strengthening the communication between members and non-members and so forth, have been raised under the rubric of "other matters related to the Security Council". A number of proposals have been submitted on this score, including a few by my own delegation. My delegation believes that it is now incumbent upon us to set out to examine if and to what extent these proposals are feasible and practicable. In any case, we firmly believe that improving the working methods of the Council will greatly contribute to the enhancement of the legitimacy and credibility of that organ.

I wish to reiterate that reform of the organization of the Council and reform of its functioning, as I have briefly described, are the two issues which together form the basis of an overall plan to reform the Security Council. It is the considered view of my delegation that these two issues therefore should be examined concurrently and agreement should be reached on both issues as soon as possible.

Finally, I should like to touch upon a procedural, but none the less important, question as to how the Working Group might best organize its work and proceed with its deliberations during the current session of the General Assembly. As I noted earlier, the Working Group is expected to continue its efforts, building upon

the results of its work during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. In the view of my delegation, the next round of the deliberations should therefore be qualitatively different from the previous round. To put it more specifically, I believe we should go beyond the exchange of respective positions of different delegations to move into the stage of formulating a package of concrete proposals to form a basis of agreement.

In order to proceed along these lines, my delegation believes it is important that the Working Group commence its deliberations as early as possible. As a prerequisite to this, we have to decide promptly upon the composition of the Bureau for the current session. I wish to state that my delegation is in favour of the solution that the President of the current session of the General Assembly serve as the Chairman of the Working Group during the present session, following the practice established last year. Further, my delegation strongly hopes that the representatives of Finland and Singapore will continue to serve as Vice-Chairmen in view of the importance of maintaining the continuity of our work and in the light of the invaluable contribution they made to the work of the Working Group during the last session of the General Assembly.

Furthermore, in order to ensure progress in our work in a constructive direction, the Working Group will benefit greatly from informal consultations to be conducted parallel with its formal meetings. This will enable us to winnow out various options that are presented and expedite the process for realizing the convergence of views in our work.

Let me close by expressing my delegation's sincere hope that the deliberations of the Working Group on this important topic will be accelerated, so that we may hope to reach agreement on a reform plan in time for the commemorative fiftieth session of the General Assembly next year. My delegation is prepared to offer its full cooperation in order to achieve this goal in our common endeavour.

Mr. Ladsous (France) *(interpretation from French)*: We have now come to the end of a year of intensive discussions in the Assembly's Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council. This year of difficult discussions was, we believe, useful, even if it has not yet resulted in any narrowing of the gap between our positions. We have today, more clearly than a year ago, a list of the problems to be resolved in order to reach an acceptable formula, and a list of the diverse aspirations of delegations in this exercise.

This will be useful as we continue our work, in the phase that should now begin, of trying to reach a successful conclusion. I wish to thank Mr. Insanally for his personal contribution to the success of the consultations during the last session. I should also like to commend Mr. Chew Tai Soo, the Ambassador of Singapore, and Mr. Breitenstein, the Ambassador of Finland, who were outstanding Vice-Chairmen and who are to continue in that role this year. We are all very happy about that. The interest publicly demonstrated on the subject by the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Amara Essy, is also an excellent omen, and we are pleased that he has assumed office at a decisive time in the exercise.

The lesson that we draw from the work of the forty-eighth session is that we must show plenty of realism in order to devise a formula for enlarging the Security Council while meeting the desire of Members for greater representativeness, compatible with effectiveness in confronting emergencies which the Council must respond.

There is no miracle solution here. But some realities should, we hope, gradually be accepted.

First of all, some States that are capable of making a decisive contribution to the United Nations in the maintenance of peace want to shoulder greater responsibilities in the Security Council. Germany and Japan are, in my delegation's opinion, fully eligible to sit in the Security Council as permanent members, with all the prerogatives and obligations of the present permanent members. My delegation's view is that it would be in the best interests of the United Nations to grant seats to these two States to enable them to shoulder the responsibilities to which they aspire.

Secondly, an increase in the representation of the more advanced countries must not create an imbalance that operates to the detriment of the developing world. This means that if Japan and Germany were to join the Security Council as permanent members, a seat should be given to the developing countries to preserve a desirable balance.

As for the modalities to ensure such complementary representation, my delegation is open to all suggestions at this stage; we do not rule out anything. For us this is not a question of principle on which permanent members

have any particular concept to defend. We need to find a compromise in the form of an arrangement or set of arrangements which it is generally agreed improves the representation in the Council. That might mean permanent membership for certain major countries from the South. My delegation does not see any obstacle in principle to that. It might also mean, either as a complementary or as an alternative formula, an increase in the number of non-permanent members, provided that the increase is only moderate and would not paralyse the Council's work. We could envisage a membership of about 20. Making the non-permanent members eligible for another term after their two years in the Security Council would provide some flexibility in the formulas for representation.

On the other aspect of the discussions under way - that is, enhancing the Security Council's methods of work with a view to strengthening it, our goals are equally clear. We wish to respect the balance of the present configuration of the organs by using all the possibilities it offers to establish trust between the Security Council and the Member States, in particular those that are making a special contribution to international peace and security by providing troops to peace-keeping operations.

The Council has already made considerable progress on all these questions in recent months. The abiding concern of its members is to ensure clarity in the way its decisions are taken and transmitted. We are sure that if we are vigilant on this score, we shall have even better results. There are of course some principles that we intend to defend vigorously: First, the Council must remain the sole master of its decision-making process. Secondly, it should not give way to the temptation to micromanage peace-keeping operations; they must continue to be managed by the Secretary-General. Thirdly, it should be careful not to make the consultation meetings too formal; the very point of the consultations is that they allow for great flexibility of organization.

But, without infringing those principles, the Council does have one way to ensure that Members of the Organization get a better hearing. Quite simply, as the French Minister for Foreign Affairs said in his address to the General Assembly, it is to reinvigorate public debate in the Council. To ensure efficiency in dealing with its heavy workload, the Council has for several years worked almost exclusively in informal consultations and, accordingly, public debate has been reduced to a succession of routine speeches delivered after the Council has already determined what decision it will take. We believe that, without giving up the advantages of informal consultations, we should enrich the debate by allowing members of the Council to have a dialogue with the Member States of the Organization in a public meeting before a position has been decided on - at least on important questions. The frustration that many delegations feel about the current methods of working could be resolved without impairing the Council's ability to react to situations.

I am convinced that there will be much decisive progress next year on both aspects of this work, heralding a welcome compromise between different but quite legitimate aspirations of the Members of the United Nations about the future of the Organization and the role they will play in it.

Mrs. Frechette (Canada): I should like to congratulate the President of the General Assembly on his election and pay tribute to his predecessor, who skillfully guided the work of the General Assembly and the Working Group on the reform of the Security Council. We would also like to thank both Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group, the Permanent Representatives of Finland and Singapore, whose tireless efforts greatly facilitated our work.

The year that has passed since our last debate on this subject has been fruitful as we have been able within the Working Group to begin a dialogue and start to identify certain areas of convergence. As indicated in the report of the Working Group there is a convergence of views on the need to increase the Council's membership. This is in itself a worthwhile result, given the complexity of the exercise. We hope that we will be able from now on to devote our energies to discussing the terms of expansion.

The report also rightly notes that the Council has taken certain steps to improve its methods of work and procedures. The progress made in this respect bodes well for further transparency in its work and increased consultations with interested Member States.

In our opinion, the expansion of the Security Council should accomplish four objectives: to make the Council more representative, to improve its efficiency, to improve its credibility and to improve its equity.

An expanded Council will be more representative if a wider variety of interests and points of view can be expressed, while keeping in mind the principle of equitable geographical distribution set out in the Charter. However, this does not mean that members of the

Council must become representatives of groups of Member States. On the contrary, it is important that while conducting broad consultations Council members continue to assume the individual responsibility conferred on them by the Charter and through their election by the General Assembly.

An expanded Council will continue to be efficient if its expansion is limited; it will still be able to make prompt and effective decisions as it is called upon to do.

An expanded Council will be more credible if its composition reflects the emergence of new important actors on the international scene. But it should also reflect the sustained contribution of certain countries over the years to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization. We think that it would be in the interests of the Organization for these countries to have more frequent or systematic access to Council membership. Their presence would increase the Council's credibility, since these nations should be willing to assume, or to continue to assume, a larger share of our collective responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Finally, an expanded, more equitable Council will improve the chances for countries that seek Council membership.

The viewpoints of Member States on the expansion of the Council are well known. It is now time to step up our work and start identifying other areas of convergence, as the Chairman of our Working Group attempted to do last year. For example, we have detected an emerging convergence of views on the desirable number of members - in the low twenties - for an expanded Council.

There is no miracle solution to the question of expanding the Security Council. Therefore, we must first of all continue to approach this exercise by focusing our efforts on our common objectives and by being flexible on the modalities of expansion. We should be ready to use our imagination and to consider different options. In this connection, new ideas such as those advanced by Italy and Australia could provide elements of a solution, and they merit further study.

Canada is open to a number of possibilities: creating new permanent seats, establishing a category of semi-permanent seats, creating new non-permanent seats with or without the possibility of re-election, or reviewing the composition of regional groups. In our opinion, none of these ideas excludes any other.

We think that the concept of semi-permanent seats, to be shared for two-year periods by two or more countries, is particularly interesting and warrants further exploration. The creation of such a category would have the double advantage of allowing countries that more fully meet the requirements of Article 23 of the Charter to sit more frequently on the Council and of lessening the number of candidates for non-permanent Member status.

Although the Council has made a great deal of progress in this direction, we feel that it must continue to improve its methods of work. In particular, Canada feels that the Council can find practical means of institutionalizing its consultations with troop-contributing nations. At present, 75 countries are providing contingents - 78,000 troops in all - for United Nations peace-keeping operations. The Council must take into account this rapid and dramatic evolution in the importance of peace-keeping, and enter into direct and regular consultations with the countries that volunteer to implement the decisions of the Security Council.

Without challenging the Council's responsibility for making the decisions required, this means that the Council should hold consultations with troop-contributing nations when renewing mandates and when significant events occur during the course of these operations. We hope that the Council will clearly recognize this necessity and fully commit itself to such consultations.

Members can rely on the cooperation of our delegation to make constructive progress in our work as we seek to achieve concrete results as soon as possible.

Mr. Laing (Belize): The delegation of Belize wishes, through our current President, to thank his predecessor, the former President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally, and the Ambassadors of Finland and Singapore for their commendable efforts in steering the deliberations of last session's Working Group on this important question. We are confident that under our current President's able leadership this matter will be significantly advanced during the current session. There is hardly any matter of greater importance on this Assembly's agenda. After all, peace and security are indispensable for effective democracy and development. Hence, democratization of the Security Council must be the critical issue of our time.

The existence of the veto is the main reason why the process of reform has been retarded. Its existence partly explains the variety of claims for permanent membership by individual States and, we have been given to understand, by some who would speak on behalf of some of the United Nations regions. It has motivated such interesting proposals as that for semi-permanent membership. All of this is quite understandable, since the main attribute of permanent membership is the veto.

During the past several months, this delegation and several others have proposed that, if it cannot be completely abolished, the veto institution should be reformed. Of the two reform proposals that Belize has endorsed, the one which seems to have the largest number of supporters is the idea that the purported exercise of the veto by one permanent member must, to be successful, have the support of at least one other permanent member.

With the veto so modified, the notion of permanent membership can itself be modified. After all, the rationale for permanent membership, as we know it, becomes irrelevant if there is no absolute right of veto. The discussion in the Working Group during the past several months has made it clear that it is this attribute of permanent membership that has stymied our efforts to agree on several matters. These include criteria for membership of the Council, the question of equity as it relates to developing countries and the number of members of an enlarged Council.

It is clear that in the new world order, democracy and equality are the paramount values. For self-evident reasons, these should be reflected in various aspects of each body of our Organization, especially in the title and incidents of membership of the Security Council. This delegation therefore proposes that there should be two classes of members: indefinite members, to replace the existing category of permanent members, and regular members, to replace the present category of non-permanent members. Each indefinite member would sit on the Council as long as it satisfied the relevant criteria. Let it be stressed that our proposals are equally applicable if the two present classes of permanent and non-permanent members are retained.

The criteria for indefinite membership should be grounded in the realities of international relations. This delegation proposes that the most crucial realities here are size of population, contribution to the Organization's budget and contribution to international peace and security. This delegation therefore proposes that the threshold for indefinite membership should be a population of 100 million. To the population threshold should be added the criterion of contribution to the Organization's budget. This delegation proposes that the minimum contribution threshold should be 5 percent. In this connection, we refer to the British proposals on assessment currently being informally discussed. A higher assessment of an additional, for example, 2 percent over the initial 5 percent would compensate for a population deficit of between 10 and 40 million.

Finally, countries with populations in excess of 800 million would automatically be indefinite members without having to satisfy additional criteria.

The chief criterion for regular Council membership would be membership of the United Nations. Such seats would be allocated on a strictly equitable geographical basis, utilizing the Organization's continental regions, and otherwise on the basis of Article 23 of the Charter, as at present written.

It is further proposed that a State that fails to satisfy the population threshold for indefinite membership might, by agreement, combine with one or more adjacent States as a composite or constituency indefinite member. Adjacency would include strategic adjacency across a body of water, no matter how large. This delegation would like to stress that under this modality, the right to vote and the exercise of the veto would be rotated, possibly at intervals of one to three months.

The composite modality is clearly a form of constituency association, which is becoming relatively popular in organizations and agencies that provide specific benefits or have defined and tangible functions. It should therefore work well in the Security Council.

It would work particularly well in connection with regular membership. In this context it would dramatically improve the opportunities of many scores of developing countries which, as demonstrated by a survey referred to by the delegation of Italy, have never been members of the Council. Furthermore, the composite or constituency modality would encourage effective regionalism and the establishment of regional arrangements or agencies under Chapter VIII of the Charter, since membership in such arrangements or agencies as are approved by the Council could be deemed to satisfy the adjacency criterion. This proposal would go far towards de-emphasizing the elitism that is now endemic in the Council.

The composite or constituency notion might be regarded as novel. In fact, the very essence of the concept of security ushered in by the Second World War and the Charter is its shared nature. This is underscored by Chapter VIII and by the main institutions of Chapter VII, including collective self-defence. Current trends in peace-keeping, peacemaking and humanitarian assistance would appear to confirm this point. Therefore, the Belize proposals, while giving full scope to the present, somewhat arbitrary, continental regions, also emphasize a variety of types of genuine security regions.

It is proposed that the maximum number of seats in the Council would be approximately 23. Of these, there would be a maximum of 9 indefinite members and a minimum of 14 regular members. Since, in both categories, a composite or constituency group of two or more States would count as one member, the actual number of participating States could be considerably larger than 23.

Whatever the surface details of my delegation's proposals, it may be that these ideas are as simple as one can expect proposals on the maintenance of peace and security to be in our twenty-first-century world of diverse regions, cultures and economic and social realities.

Mr. Somavia (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: General Assembly resolution 47/62, adopted late in 1992, which requested the Secretary-General to invite Member States to submit written comments on a possible review of the membership of the Security Council, clearly indicated the vital importance of this agenda item, not only for the Council itself but for the future of the United Nations as a whole.

We are therefore not surprised at the considerable interest that has been awakened by the discussion on the subject that has been held over the past two years, one marked by a wide participation that has been highly instructive. That interest has been evident in the many written replies received by the Secretary-General in keeping with the aforementioned resolution and, particularly, in the General Assembly Working Group so effectively and seriously guided by Ambassador Samuel Insanally, with the invaluable assistance of the two Vice-Chairmen, the Permanent Representatives of Finland, Ambassador Wilhelm Breitenstein, and of Singapore, Ambassador Chew Tai Soo, whom I congratulate for their excellent work.

Similarly, the enormous importance Member States attach to this subject has been demonstrated in the general debates of the last two sessions of the Assembly, in 1993 and this year, during the course of which nearly every Head of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs made reference to the item. There can be no doubt that a clear consensus exists among Members of the United Nations on the need and urgency to proceed to reform the structures and procedures of the Security Council.

While the report on the progress made by the Working Group has been factual in nature where we might have hoped to see it reflect some progress on substantive questions, we believe that debate within that Group has been as useful as it has been necessary.

The open, frank and constructive participation of so many delegations expressing often very different positions is, in our opinion, an unavoidable phase through which we must pass if we wish to achieve a broad and solid political agreement that will fully reflect the majority will of Member States.

Thus, we must not curb this impetus but must increase our efforts to achieve, within a reasonable period of time, a consensus on the substantive issues under discussion.

My delegation has always felt that we must constantly bear in mind the fact that the restructuring of the Security Council must be especially aimed at strengthening its effectiveness, its representativeness and the legitimacy of its task, and at making the Council more democratic, to enable it better to meet present and future challenges. We believe that the Council, by carrying out its principal task of maintaining international peace and security, will help build the safer and more humane world to which we all aspire.

We are also convinced that those concepts, which are closely linked, are related to a creative and standing relationship between the Council and the General Assembly and other organs and organizations, as well as with States that are not members of the Council, and related also to the reform of the working methods and procedures of the Council. This is especially needed when it comes to countries involved in peace-keeping operations, which have legitimate interests and whose proposals must be heard.

Similarly, Chile's delegation deems it especially important for reform to lead to greater transparency in decision-making, something that is indispensable if we want to enhance the Council's legitimacy and credibility.

We also believe that all States Members must agree to comply with its mandates as provided for by the Charter.

The Government of Chile has welcomed the progress towards greater transparency in the Council's practices and procedures that do not require changes in the Charter. We view this as a first step in the right direction.

A balanced increase in the number of members of the Security Council has become a necessity in today's international climate. In our view, that increase must reflect the current number of States Members of the Organization and the reality of the new international scene in all its aspects, as well as equitable representation for all existing regional groups.

We agree with the general view that has emerged from the discussions of the Working Group that the adjustment in the Council's membership should not exceed 24 or 25, so as the better to reflect present-day realities. While it is of special importance to enhance the effectiveness of the Council's work, we believe that that should not become a pretext for inhibiting the expansion of its membership.

The President returned to the Chair.

Because of the importance my delegation attaches to the need for greater democratization and balance in the Council's composition and decision-making mechanism, we have proposed, *inter alia*, the establishment of a category of regional members with an extended mandate. A new category of this kind would give countries in the main regions of the developed world - as regional representatives or representatives with an extended mandate - a say in the Council's decisions, without the right of veto, and with the possibility of re-election.

We have also said that we favour the establishment of a category of permanent member without the right of veto. This would enable countries with the necessary economic and political capacity to contribute to the work of the Council. We repeat that we are not proponents of an extension of the right of veto. We welcome the fact that the veto has been used less in recent years, and we look forward to the devising of formulas to avoid its use in the future.

As regards categories, we have considered the retention of the category of non-permanent member without the possibility of re-election; the criteria for their election are contained in Article 23 of the Charter, but we must bear in mind that this Article refers also to equitable geographical distribution.

The Security Council cannot be designed to take account of the strategic needs or privileges of just some States. It must faithfully meet the criteria of wide representativeness if it is to enhance the international community's unequivocal and universal support for all its resolutions and decisions. At stake here is not just the reform *per se* of an organ of the system but the very credibility and prestige of the United Nations itself.

The Government of Chile, aware that this item will pose major challenges and involve major responsibilities, aspires to a seat on the Security Council for the period 1996 and 1997 with a view to contributing to the new spirit of cooperation in international relations. As the Foreign Minister of Chile pointed out at this rostrum a few days ago, we are convinced that we can legitimately and properly represent the interests of Latin America and the Caribbean, and indeed of the international community, in this important organ.

We should like to express our satisfaction at the open-mindedness and the active participation that have so far been demonstrated in the treatment of this very complex item. We hope that we shall soon see the consensus necessary to achieving progress in respect of the substantive aspects of our debate. Thus we support Japan's suggestion that the Assembly give swift approval to a package of specific proposals. To this end, we call upon all delegations to act with flexibility and pragmatism in the negotiations that are to begin, so that we may soon have a restructured Security Council better able to meet the urgent requirements of our times.

Mr. Pálsson (Iceland): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the five Nordic countries - Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden - in addressing the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

I should like, first of all, to take this opportunity to thank the President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, Ambassador Samuel Insanally, for his wise leadership of the Open-ended Working Group.

Statements by Foreign Ministers and other representatives of the Nordic countries who participated in the general debate of the General Assembly's current session attest to the importance the Nordic countries continue to attach to this issue. May I refer also to the

joint Nordic position paper that was presented in the Working Group last June. This paper covered, in a preliminary way, most of the questions under discussion. Its aim was, first and foremost, to contribute to the ongoing debate and, in so doing, to facilitate the building of the widest possible support for what the Nordic countries regard as necessary reform of the Security Council. We stand ready to develop further the thoughts contained in the paper, in cooperation with other interested delegations.

While I do not wish to recapitulate the paper's main points, which remain valid, I should like to use this opportunity to reiterate the Nordic countries' strong support for limited expansion of Council membership. This would strengthen the Council's ability to act rapidly and effectively, while reflecting the growing number of States Members of the Organization. Furthermore, particular importance should be given to the question of additional seats for non-permanent members, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution. It is also the view of the Nordic countries that only a limited number of new seats should be designated as permanent.

Since June the Working Group has submitted a report to the General Assembly. The Nordic countries welcome the report and appreciate the Group's dedicated efforts in harmonizing the different views that were put forward. At the same time, it is clear that the complex questions that the Working Group has been called upon to deal with require further study and reflection. I should like to reiterate the Nordic countries' keen interest in pursuing this matter further.

In the general debate several countries presented a number of ideas and thoughts on how to take the issue forward. In the view of the Nordic countries, time is now needed to contemplate the various new ideas. However, this does not mean that the matter should be allowed to lapse. We believe that consultations with all interested delegations should take place during the main part of the General Assembly session. A realistic and regular schedule of meetings of the Open-ended Working Group should be arranged for that purpose. Such meetings could be supplemented, as appropriate, by smaller, informal group discussions on specific issues.

Whatever the form, the Nordic countries consider it important that this work be continued with a view to arriving, in due course, at a conclusion acceptable to all.

Mr. Inderfurth (United States of America): Let me begin, Sir, by repeating President Clinton's congratulations to you on your recent election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. The United States is pleased to see you in the Chair, and we look forward to working with you to ensure a successful session.

I should like also to express our thanks to your predecessor, Ambassador Insanally, for his leadership of the General Assembly during its forty-eighth session. We are grateful for his efforts in his capacity as President of the Assembly and for his work as Chairman, together with his Vice-Chairmen, the Ambassadors of Finland and of Singapore, in guiding and assisting the Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council.

From our perspective, the debate in the Working Group was highly constructive. While no conclusions were drawn, as noted in the progress report, there was a convergence of views that the membership of the Security Council should be enlarged. Of course, differences remain over how best to achieve an expansion, but this is to be expected on an issue of such high national interest to so many. Moreover, in our judgement, the debate gave rise to several broadly supported principles that could guide future efforts as we seek final agreement.

Several of these principles were reiterated by our colleagues during the general debate just concluded. Let me summarize them. First, as the statements of Argentina, Austria and Poland rightly stressed, the test of acceptability of any decision to expand the Council must be that it broadens participation while safeguarding operational efficiency and effectiveness. Secondly, the Netherlands, Costa Rica, Indonesia and others have reminded us that a country's specific strengths - its capacity for constructive global influence and to undertake and sustain heavy global responsibilities - are a critical test of eligibility for permanent membership. Finally, Kenya, Canada, New Zealand, Spain and many others have emphasized that the goal of a stronger, more effective Security Council, clearly served by a careful expansion, also requires greater transparency and openness in Council procedures.

If we take these principles to be our compass, we cannot fail to see our course clearly. Indeed, the views of the United States are precisely along these lines. First, we welcome changes to the Council's composition

that enhance its representativeness while protecting its effectiveness and efficiency. Secondly, the existing permanent members of the Security Council are countries with global political and economic influence and a capacity to contribute to peace and security by concrete measures on a global basis. Thirdly, guided by the criteria just noted, we enthusiastically endorse Japan and Germany for permanent membership. Fourthly, we also see the need for an increase in non-permanent seats, namely, an addition of three seats for a total Council membership of 20. Fifthly, in order to give Member States greater influence over the selection of non-permanent Council members without restricting the opportunity of small countries to serve as Council members, we favour exempting non-permanent seats from the prohibition of re-election. Finally, the Security Council is actively pursuing means by which non-members may contribute to its work. The United States is directly engaged in this effort, which has already produced valuable results, and we believe that it must continue.

Our pursuit of a stronger Council reflects our conclusion that, to meet the challenges increasingly entrusted to its care, the Council will require a broader and deeper partnership - a partnership to lead collective efforts and to share the many and varied burdens. This has three implications for today's Security Council.

First, it means that the nucleus of capabilities represented by the permanent members should be expanded. The addition of Japan and Germany will join the energies, talents and resources of these enormously capable countries to the task of safeguarding our common security. Indeed, Japan and Germany have shown themselves eager and well-equipped to act in newly critical areas such as peace-building and conflict prevention.

Secondly, an enhanced partnership means two things for the non-permanent seats. They ought to be increased in number without damaging Council decision-making and the rotation of countries in those seats should assure that the Council can benefit from the participation of those countries, including small States, with a record of constructive involvement in United Nations peace and security efforts.

Lastly, to build a deeper, broader partnership requires that the Security Council move firmly to establish strong, sustainable working relationships with those non-members, such as troop contributors, whose continued support is essential to the success of Council members and mandates. On the latter point, we want to emphasize that important steps have already been taken to improve the flow of information about Council decisions and to provide occasion for troop contributors to offer views on matters pertinent to Council decisions on peace-keeping mandates. One example is a growing participation by Security Council members in troop-contributor meetings. This practice has enabled troop contributors concerned about some aspect of a proposed mandate change to inform Council members directly of their views. Indeed, in one instance it provided for direct exchanges on the elements of a proposed resolution.

A number of additional steps might be explored. One possibility is for Council members to make more regular use of selected troop-contributor meetings to invite comment on resolution elements concerning changes in peace-keeping mandates. While such meetings will still be chaired by the Secretariat, the role of the Secretariat in such cases could be to provide a venue for direct exchanges between Council members and troop contributors.

The United States is committed to exploring ways to strengthen working relations with troop contributors, and more openness and transparency are certainly possible. But I should caution that, in decision making, transparency is a good servant but a poor master. Too much will inhibit frank discussion and drive it away from the Council's chambers to settings in which privacy can be assured. That would not serve anyone's interests.

In closing, let me make a few points about process. First, over the course of the general debate, some speakers have urged their colleagues to delay any action on Security Council expansion for several years. They argue that the world is so unsettled today that it is unwise to enter into structural changes to the Security Council which are intended to be lasting. For the United States, this is a false choice. The case to strengthen the Council is compelling precisely because of the mounting tumult of the post-cold-war world and the dangers it poses to all of us, not 10 years from now but today.

Secondly, while the sessions of the Working Group were helpful in defining the spread of opinion and bringing forth the principles I mentioned, they are too large a venue for the frank give-and-take needed to bridge remaining differences. We therefore urge you, Sir, and the Bureau to consider inviting small, informal groups of Members to meet with you over the coming months to explore areas of common ground and possible formulas for reaching agreement on Council expansion. Sessions of the Working Group could be convened

periodically to take stock of these discussions and to review the progress made.

Finally, as others stated during the general debate, we too would like to see an acceleration of deliberations on this subject during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. But in this regard we do not favour a piecemeal approach. Rather, we are hopeful that agreement may be reached on all elements of an overall package by the fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

Agenda item 8 ***(continued)***

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: reports of the General Committee

Second report of the General Committee (A/49/250/Add.1)

The President *(interpretation from French):* I draw the attention of representatives to the second report of the General Committee concerning the allocation of agenda items 152 and 92, two requests for the reconsideration of the allocation of sub-items (d) and (e) of agenda item 89, and a request by the delegation of Afghanistan for the inclusion in the agenda of an additional sub-item.

In paragraph 1 of the report, the General Committee recommends to the Assembly that item 152 of the agenda, entitled "Observer status for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the General Assembly", be considered directly in plenary meeting, on the understanding that no further question beyond items 151 - "Observer status for the South Pacific Forum in the General Assembly" - and 152, on the granting of observer status in the General Assembly to applicants other than intergovernmental organizations, would be considered until criteria for the granting of such observer status have been established.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts this recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* In paragraph 2 of the report (A/49/250/Add.1), the General Committee recommends to the Assembly that, pursuant to resolution 48/166 of 21 December 1993, item 92 of the agenda, entitled "Agenda for development", should be considered in special plenary meetings at a high level and that subsequent negotiations on the item take place in the Second Committee.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts this recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* Next, I draw the attention of representatives to paragraph 3 of the report (A/49/250/Add.1).

The General Committee recommends that the General Assembly reconsider the allocation of sub-item (d) of agenda item 89, entitled "Elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa", and that it decide to hold the debate in plenary meeting, on the understanding that action on the sub-item would be taken in the Second Committee.

I should like to point out that the Assembly must first decide that it wishes to reconsider the allocation of sub-item (d) of agenda item 89, under rule 81 of the rules of procedure.

May I take it the Assembly decides to reconsider the allocation of this sub-item?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* May I now take it that the General Assembly adopts the recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now draw the attention of representatives to paragraph 4 of the report (A/49/250/Add.1).

The General Committee recommends that the General Assembly reconsider its recommendation on the allocation of sub-item (e) of agenda item 89, entitled "Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States", and that it decide to hold the debate in plenary meeting, on the understanding that action on the sub-item would be taken in the Second Committee.

I should like to point out to the Assembly that the Assembly must first decide that it wishes to reconsider the allocation of sub-item (e) of agenda item 89, under rule 81 of the rules of procedure.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to reconsider the allocation of this sub-item?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* May I now take it that the General Assembly adopts the recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* Next, I should like to draw the attention of representatives to paragraph 5(a) of the report (A/49/250/Add.1).

The General Committee recommends the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional sub-item entitled "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan", as sub-item (e) of agenda item 37.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include in its agenda this additional sub-item as sub-item (e) of agenda item 37?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French):* In paragraph 5 (b) of the report, the General Committee recommends that the sub-item be considered directly in plenary meeting.

May I take it that the General Assembly adopts the recommendation of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The President *(interpretation from French):* I should like to announce that tomorrow, Friday, 14 October 1994, the General Assembly will meet in the morning to continue its consideration of agenda item 33 and will also consider a report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 120 - "Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador" - to be issued as document A/49/503. In the afternoon, the Assembly will conclude the debate on agenda item 33.

I should like to inform members that the Assembly will consider agenda item 152, entitled "Observer status for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the General Assembly", at a later date to be announced in the Journal.

Regarding item 92, "Agenda for development", the special plenary meetings at a high level to consider ways of promoting and giving political impetus to an agenda for development, which were called for in resolution 48/166 of 21 December 1993, will be held on Monday, 21 November.

On Friday, 21 October, the Assembly will hold the debate on sub-item (d) of agenda item 89, entitled "Elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa".

On Monday, 7 November, the Assembly will hold the debate on sub-item (e) of agenda item 89, entitled "Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States."

Lastly, with regard to sub-item (e), on Afghanistan, of agenda item 37, "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", the Assembly will consider agenda item 37 as a whole on Wednesday, 23 November.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.

United Nations A/49/PV.31

General Assembly

Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

31st Meeting
Friday, 14 October 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 112 *(continued)*

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/49/400/Add.3)

The President *(interpretation from French)*: In a letter contained in document A/49/400/Add.3 the Secretary-General informs me that, since the issuance of his communications dated 20 and 26 September and 5 October 1994, Guatemala has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 33 *(continued)*

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. Marker (Pakistan): Pakistan has actively participated in the constructive consultations held by the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council. I would again wish to express our deep appreciation for the able manner in which Mr. Insanally, the preceding President of the General Assembly, and the two Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Chew Tai Soo of Singapore and Mr. Wilhelm Breitenstein of Finland, guided the work of the Group.

Despite the extensive consultations held on this issue, the gap between the divergent views held by various delegations was not bridged. Thus, the Group's deliberations could not culminate in concrete conclusions and recommendations. As is noted in the Working Group's report and the Secretary-General's annual report on the Work of the Organization, this subject is open for further discussion.

In any review of this issue, the proposed reform and enlargement of the Security Council has to be understood in its proper historical context and perspective. In the aftermath of the tragic devastation caused by the Second World War, the United Nations was created "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". The Security Council was conceived as the principal organ for the maintenance of international peace and security. The presumption was that five permanent members, allies during the war, would continue to act in harmony. This assumption proved incorrect once the world became polarized during the prolonged cold war. During that period, the Council was unable to reach decisions on any issue that invoked the rival interests of the two super-Power blocs. Most conflicts were settled not by the Council but by the major Powers outside the Council.

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At the end of the cold war, and after the experience of the Gulf War, hopes were revived that a more confident, effective and strengthened Security Council could emerge as an important deterrent to aggression, and where aggression occurred, as an instrument to reverse it. However, subsequent experience has tempered these hopes and expectations. The failure of the Council to implement its resolutions on Bosnia and Herzegovina, its inadequate response to events in Rwanda, its inability to implement its resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir have all contributed to a sense of insecurity. Instead of a new world order, supervised by the Security Council, we are confronted with a series of disputes and conflicts across Africa and Euro-Asia.

It is in this context, and with a full appreciation of the Security Council's strengths and limitations, that we should seek to promote ways and means to make it more effective in preserving international peace and security. The Security Council has in-built inequities. It is composed of a very small number of Member States. It is divided between permanent and non-permanent members, those with the veto and those without.

The purpose of our present exercise should be to promote greater democracy and transparency in the work of the Council. Our aim should be to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter. We must avoid any attempt to perpetuate and accentuate the existing inequalities by creating new centres of privilege. Our endeavour must be to strengthen, not erode, the principle of the sovereign equality of States enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

The general membership of the United Nations has increased from 51 in 1945 to 184 in 1994. We therefore share the general desire of Member States to strengthen the role of the Council, as well as to review its composition to reflect adequately the increase in its membership, particularly of the larger number of small and medium-sized States that have joined the United Nations.

The Council's current composition lacks balance in terms of geographic distribution. However, any attempt to provide greater representation to various regions should reflect the circumstances existing within each region. The arguments for equitable regional representation must be viewed in the context of the legitimate concerns of all Member States within the region concerned. The accommodation of regional representation should not fuel tendencies towards hegemony and domination which are manifest in some regions. Again, our approach must uphold the sovereign equality of States, large or small.

We must bear in mind that this item was originally inscribed to consider an increase in the non-permanent membership of the Security Council. We should not allow the present consultations to be taken over to accommodate the objectives of only a few countries. An increase in the permanent membership of the Council, instead of enhancing the Council's effectiveness, would serve only to alienate the small and medium-sized countries that constitute a majority in the General Assembly.

Some concepts for creating new categories, such as regional or semi-permanent members, have been introduced. They need further discussion and intensive consultations. The criteria for non-permanent membership, in addition to those contained in Article 23 of the Charter, require to be more seriously applied. These criteria clearly imply that, in accordance with Articles 24 and 25, Member States represented in the Council must be willing to act on behalf of all United Nations Member States in a prompt and effective manner and, more important, that they will consistently implement the decisions of the Council. Those States that continue to flout the principles of the Charter and to defy the resolutions of the Security Council cannot aspire to serve as the guardians of peace on the Security Council.

Obviously, the size of a reformed Security Council would be central to the reform package. The Council should be kept small enough to guarantee efficiency and effectiveness, but it should be large enough to ensure adequate representation of the small and medium-sized States. However, in addition to the size of the Council there are other aspects that need equal attention in the reform process.

Any meaningful review of the functioning of the Council should encompass the broader and vital issues of democratization and transparency in the decision-making process. During the consultations held by the Working Group, many proposals have been put forward which can facilitate the involvement of the general membership in the Council's decision-making process.

Democratization can be achieved by redefining the Council's relationship with the General Assembly and with other United Nations bodies. A fresh look should be given to Articles 11, 12 and 24 of the Charter, with a view to evolving a joint working relationship between the

Council and the General Assembly in the maintenance of international peace and security. An effective mechanism can be established to convey to the Council the General Assembly's views and recommendations on peace and security as a means of enhancing the participation of the general membership of our Organization in the Council's decision-making process. Instead of the present practice of a pro-forma discussion of the Council's annual report, the General Assembly should discuss it more substantively and critically, in accordance with Articles 11, 14 and 35 of the Charter. A working group of the Assembly could be created to analyse the Council's report before its consideration in the plenary Assembly.

The Open-ended Working Group could also examine the possibility of creating a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly under Article 22 which could consider and discuss questions related to international peace and security that might be brought before it by a Member of the United Nations or of the Security Council, as provided in the Charter. In addition, the Presidents of the Security Council and the General Assembly should meet regularly to coordinate the work of the two bodies.

The linkage between economic and social problems and political upheavals in various parts of the world is all too obvious. There is an urgent need to strengthen the relationship between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, so that economic and social factors are accorded their due weight in decisions relating to international peace and security. There is legitimate reason to fear that the economic crises of today — debt, desertification, decline in commodity prices — could lead to the political conflicts of tomorrow within and among States. The Economic and Social Council could serve, in many cases, to provide the Security Council an early warning of impending upheavals and conflicts.

The onus for promoting greater transparency is on the Security Council. We are happy to note that during the last year the Council has taken many positive steps to enhance its relationship with the General Assembly. However, more concrete steps are required for closer consultation with United Nations Members, particularly the troop-contributing countries, in pursuance of Article 44. The President of the Security Council should provide regular and substantive briefings to the general membership on the major issues before the Council. A subsidiary organ of the Council could be established, under Article 29, to monitor the peace-keeping operations and to institutionalize a system of direct consultations with troop-contributing countries during the process of making decisions regarding such operations.

We fully support the position taken on this issue by the Non-Aligned Movement at its summit in Jakarta in 1992, and at the ministerial meeting in Cairo last June.

It is of fundamental importance that the outcome of our efforts be in strict conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It must be based on consensus and agreement among Member States. A decision on this question that lacks the support of the general United Nations membership will be counterproductive. It could erode general support for the future role of the Security Council and cast doubt on the sanctity of its decisions.

In conclusion, I should like to offer a few comments on the pace of work of the Open-ended Working Group. The last reform of the Council took years to mature, although it addressed only one question: an increase in the non-permanent membership. It takes time to muster broad support for Charter amendments. Today, we are embarking on a comprehensive reform of the Council, including its enlargement.

Pakistan will work patiently and diligently with other United Nations Members to evolve a decision on the reform of the Security Council that advances the cause of peace, security and the aims and objectives of the Charter. We have to be patient in this important exercise without being tardy.

Mr. Gomersall (United Kingdom): Mr. President, may I first add my congratulations to you on the assumption of your high office.

The general debate of the General Assembly has reaffirmed, if reaffirmation were needed, the importance that Member States of this Organization accord to the enlargement of the Security Council. A representative and effective Security Council is clearly in the interests of all.

My delegation believes that there has been genuine progress over the last year in increasing common understanding of the issues, and that we have now reached the stage where we should be able to move beyond the delivery of prepared statements and begin to look at ways of resolving the important outstanding questions in a substantive way. My Government's position on most aspects of the enlargement question has

already been set out in detail in the Open-ended Working Group. But it is probably worth recalling our view that any enlargement of the Council should be relatively limited, to around 19 or 20 members, so that the Council's effectiveness is not jeopardized; and that if consensus can be reached certain countries, by virtue of their global interests and their contribution to international security and to United Nations operations, should be invited to accept the responsibilities of permanent membership. In that context, we would support the permanent membership of Japan and Germany.

Concerning "Other related matters", the Security Council, through the work of its informal Working Group concerning the Council's documentation and other procedural questions, has taken a number of steps over the last year to increase the transparency of Council activities. Priority has also been given to efforts to enhance arrangements for consultation of troop contributors. My Government supports the proposal that the Secretariat should, as a matter of course, convene meetings with troop contributors and members of the Council for the exchange of information and views in good time in advance of decisions by the Council on the extension or termination of, or significant change in, the mandate of peace-keeping operations. These issues will no doubt be further discussed during the debate on the report of the Council to the Assembly on 26 October. But I would like to reaffirm my delegation's commitment to continuing to support the Council's efforts to enhance transparency, while doing nothing that would damage its efficiency and effectiveness.

Although the task before the Open-ended Working Group remains a difficult and sensitive one, we were glad to note that there was some convergence of views in the course of its work this year on the nature of the enlargement that might be achieved. We must maintain the momentum of this work in the weeks and months ahead, supplemented, where possible, by informal consultations to seek out areas of possible agreement. Next year's fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations will be a significant milestone in our debate. My delegation will work with others to achieve, if possible, a positive outcome on this most important question.

Mr. Noterdaeme (Belgium) *(interpretation from French)*: On 14 September last, the General Assembly took note of the report (A/48/47) of the Open-ended Working Group, which was instructed, in pursuance of resolution 48/26, to consider all aspects of the question of increase of the membership of the Security Council, and other matters related to the Security Council. This report illustrates the divergences that persist regarding various aspects of reform of the Security Council, whose complexity and sensitive nature are clear to all.

The General Assembly decided that the Working Group should continue its consultations during the forty-ninth session and submit a further report before the end of the session. As in the past, Belgium will participate in those consultations actively and in a spirit of consensus.

I want to take this opportunity to recall the main lines of Belgium's thinking on reform of the Security Council. Belgium considers that Security Council reform should not betray the spirit of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations that specify the composition and mandate of this principal organ of the United Nations. The maintenance of international peace and security is one of the main purposes of the Charter to which Belgium attaches paramount importance.

The current system of collective security controlled by the Security Council is imperfect to be sure. But it has the merit of being the only universal tool for conflict management. In view of the continuing threat of crisis facing the international community, the Security Council's effectiveness and capacity for action must be preserved. For Belgium, therefore, the present debate on reform of the Security Council should always be directed at strengthening the Council's action for the maintenance of international peace and security. While the faults and shortcomings of the system should be eliminated to the extent possible, we should not forget that the main purpose of this exercise is the maintenance of international peace and security.

Past, present and, no doubt, future imperfections in the collective-security system oblige us to lower our sights somewhat. Belgium is convinced that the best basis for reforming the Security Council is pragmatism, not prejudgements and highly detailed theorizing. Like the United Nations itself, the Council is but a reflection of the relations among States Members of the Organization. Recent developments in those relations make it imperative that the Council be adapted to the new challenges before it. But we would certainly risk failure if we tried to use this need for legitimate change to launch a real revolution, which would be unrealistic given the difficulty of attaining its objectives.

That is the conceptual approach that Belgium thinks should guide future work on the reform of the Security

Council; on the basis of that approach let me outline some of the practical outcomes of such reform.

First of all, if it is the view that the recent growth in the membership of the United Nations must be reflected in increased membership of the Security Council, Belgium continues to favour a limited increase. We consider that an increase of from two to five additional members would seem most appropriate to respond both to the Council's need for effectiveness and to the need for better representativity.

Secondly, as my Minister for Foreign Affairs said recently in this Hall, the international community would do well to grant permanent membership to two economic Powers whose positive role in world affairs has long been recognized. As the Secretary-General observed in his most recent report on the work of the Organization, economic and social development contribute to strengthening the maintenance of international peace and security. Hence, surely it is reasonable to give a special place on the Council to those who are in a position to support such economic and social development, on the same conditions as those applying to the five present permanent members. Moreover, an additional non-permanent seat should be granted to the regions that consider themselves under-represented.

Thirdly, the distinction between permanent and non-permanent members should remain unchanged. It is an established state of affairs that is accepted by all. To try to modify it by creating a new category of membership would spark an unpredictable debate on determining the new criteria.

Fourthly, the Working Group's experience shows the difficulty of achieving concurrent consensus on all aspects of Security Council reform. While we recognize that all the aspects of this reform are equally valuable, perhaps we could gradually identify those on which consensus is in sight while also continuing our efforts to narrow the remaining differences on other aspects.

It was my purpose today to reiterate Belgium's interest in the question of reform of the Security Council. With further Working Group consultations in view, I wanted to recall our conceptual approach and some of its practical results. For Belgium, realism continues to be the most reasonable approach if we want to achieve reform of the Security Council, and particularly if we want to retain some influence on the ongoing process. For some, the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations could be the setting for Security Council reform. Certainly, Belgium would favour reform of the Security Council coinciding, if possible, with the marking of the Organization's half century.

Mr. Wang Xuexian (China) *(interpretation from Chinese)*: The Chinese delegation welcomes the continued consideration at the current session of the General Assembly of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. Here, we would also like to welcome the first report submitted by the Open-ended Working Group set up in accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/26. We appreciate the large amount of work the Working Group has managed to accomplish under the guidance of His Excellency Mr. Samuel R. Insanally, President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, and of the two Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group, the Permanent Representatives of Finland and Singapore.

China is in favour of Security Council reform. In our view, necessary reform of the Security Council must be carried out because of the need to adapt the Council to the changed world situation and to meet the grave challenges before us. The Chinese delegation is of the view that appropriate expansion of the Security Council and needed improvement of its working methods should aim, first of all, at improving the Council's representation so that it will better reflect the collective will and common aspiration of the States Members of the United Nations, and secondly, at enhancing the Council's effectiveness and efficiency so as to maintain and strengthen its positive role in world affairs in the new situation and to enable it to perform more effectively the various tasks mandated by the United Nations Charter. All reform measures should be conducive to the realization of those objectives.

Reform of the Security Council involves the interest of all States Members of the United Nations and is an issue of concern and importance to all countries. Any reform measures should reflect the interest of every Member State. In this regard, we are of the view that in any expansion of the Council, the principle of equitable geographical distribution should be observed and full consideration should be given to the aspirations and interests of developing countries, which account for the majority of the United Nations membership, so as to enable those countries to play a more active role in United Nations affairs. Practices which might lead to the creation of any new imbalances should be avoided. At the same time, we also believe that all aspects of the question

of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Council are interrelated and should be dealt with as a whole package in a balanced manner.

Ever since the establishment of the Open-ended Working Group, the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council has remained an issue to which all countries attach great importance. Many countries participated actively in the deliberations and put forward a series of specific proposals. At the same time, broad discussions were also conducted regarding an increase in transparency of the Council's work, the improvement of its working methods as well as the strengthening of the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly in the performance of their respective functions. In our view, these discussions are very useful for increasing mutual understanding and reaching consensus among nations. Naturally, different opinions by various countries also arise in these discussions on specific aspects of the reform and, in certain areas, the differences are fairly wide. This shows that the task facing us remains arduous and a serious, practical and patient approach is required to continue the extensive exchange of views and to seek common ground step by step.

The Chinese delegation hopes that the Open-ended Working Group will continue its effective work during the current session of the General Assembly and, based on the previous discussions, conduct a serious and detailed study on the reasonable and useful suggestions raised by Member States so as to formulate, at an early date, a reform programme acceptable to all States Members of the United Nations.

Mr. Khandogy (Ukraine): The delegation of Ukraine would like first of all to express sincere gratitude to Ambassador Insanally, President of the General Assembly, at its forty-eighth session, who guided the deliberations of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council. His skilful and experienced guidance enabled the Working Group to do a considerable amount of work. We would also like to thank the Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Breitenstein and Ambassador Chew Tai Soo for their important contribution.

The Open-ended Working Group was, in our opinion, one of the most important forums at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. This can be explained, first of all, by the importance of the problems discussed and by the attention Member States paid to its work. During the discussion, a great number of proposals on various aspects of this question were made. However, special emphasis was placed on the problem of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

We feel that the outcome of the discussions is accurately reflected in the report of the Working Group, which states that:

> "While there was a convergence of views that the membership of the Security Council should be enlarged, there was also agreement that the scope and nature of such enlargement require further discussion." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, A/48/47, para. 8)*

The delegation of Ukraine agrees with such a conclusion. We believed and continue to believe that the current composition of the Security Council, its functioning and methods of work ought to be adjusted in order to make the Security Council a more representative body taking into account new regional realities and new participants in international relations.

The enlargement of the membership of the Council, which is a principal organ of the United Nations, acting in accordance with Charter provisions on behalf of all Member States, would considerably enhance the credibility and legitimacy of its decisions. It is essential, however, to preserve the effectiveness of the Council's work, its capacity to respond without delay to any threat to peace and security, to consider promptly such situations and to take necessary decisions based on the Charter.

Discussions held in the Working Group illustrated that to achieve this balance, which would be acceptable to all regional groups and all Member States, was not an easy task. There were various proposals concerning the enlargement of the Council such as to increase the membership by only a few States or to bring it up to 30 members, and even more. We think that a mutually acceptable solution should be somewhere in the middle of the proposed range. We have already stated in the Working Group, and we would like to repeat that, in our view, the Security Council should consist of 25 States. Such an enlargement would make it possible, first, to preserve the important principle of equitable geographical representation in the Council laid down in Article 24 of the Charter and would meet the interests of all — and I emphasize — all regional groups; and, secondly, it would

not hamper prompt, effective and resolute actions by the Council, which are required by Article 24 of the Charter.

In so far as our delegation represents a State that is part of the Eastern European regional group, I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the following.

In 1963, when the first and only reform of the Council was undertaken, the Eastern European Group consisted of 10 States and was represented in the Council by one permanent and one non-permanent member. Today, the membership of this group has doubled, but for 20 States we have the same number of seats: one permanent and one non-permanent — which means that 19 States are competing for one rotating seat. Thus, each State of the Group has a chance to be elected to the Council on an average once in 38 years. Obviously, such a prospect is not to be envied. Therefore, we would like to stress, once again, that any decision on the question of enlargement of the Security Council should take into account the interests of all regional groups on the basis of the principle of equitable geographical distribution. Disregarding this principle would make achievement of a consensus acceptable to all very difficult.

The delegation of Ukraine would also like to stress that the enlargement of the Council by 10 seats which we, as well as a number of other delegations propose, would make it possible to accommodate some other formulas put forward in the Working Group and in the Assembly, in particular, the formula "2+3".

At the meetings of the Working Group and, indeed, in the Assembly, the delegation of Italy and a number of other delegations, including Ukraine, proposed consideration of a structure of the Council that would enable some States that make considerable contributions to United Nations activities to be represented on the Council more often. What was meant was a so-called third category of members of the Security Council. Some delegations supported this proposal. However, some other countries either expressed doubts about the advisability of the existence of the "third category" or strongly objected to this idea. In this context we would like to emphasize that we continue to find it useful and worthy of further consideration.

We are convinced that all United Nations Member States would benefit from the establishment of a third category. States which make a greater contribution to the maintenance of international peace and the achievement of other goals of the United Nations, and which carry heavy financial obligations, would have a better possibility of participating in the Council's work, and, thus, paragraph 1 of Article 23 of the United Nations Charter would be implemented more fully. At the same time, having been placed in the third category, these States would not aspire to the seats subject to the usual rotation in accordance with paragraph 2 of Article 23. That would allow small States to be represented in the Council more often and consequently to participate more actively in the work of one of the principal organs of the United Nations.

The question of the composition of the Council is organically linked with the voting procedure. In this context a number of delegations have expressed their views on the advisability of a modification of the right to the veto. This concept was brought to the United Nations Charter from the League of Nations but acquired a somewhat different shade of meaning in the Organization: from being a tool to maintain a balance between the super-Powers in the period before the Second World War, it became a mechanism for ideological confrontation between two systems in the post-war period. Through the replacement of confrontation by cooperation since the end of the cold war and the strengthening of the partnership between permanent members of the Security Council, an opportunity is provided to reconsider this mechanism.

In this connection, and in the light of other realities of the modern world, it seems appropriate to change the procedure that now allows one State to block the solution of a question that is of concern to the entire international community. For instance, consideration might be given to the idea of weighted voting. Another possibility is to entrust the General Assembly with the right to overrule the veto if it was imposed by only one permanent member. There are also other proposals on this matter. Changing the existing procedure would constitute an important element in the democratization of the Security Council in particular and the United Nations in general.

The delegation of Ukraine also shares the view, repeatedly expressed in the Working Group, that greater transparency must be ensured in the work of the Security Council, particularly in the decision-making process. We think that this would allow all Members of the Organization to participate more actively in the Council's work and would ensure stronger support for its decisions by all Member States.

The Working Group has done extremely important work. It has showed how States Members of the United Nations perceive the Security Council. The range of relevant views is very broad but much is still to be done to coordinate positions so that future membership of the Council, the efficiency of its work, and its composition meet the interests of all regional groups, all States in general, and each State in particular. Ukraine is ready to cooperate with other States for precisely such a reform of the Security Council.

Mr. Yañez-Barnuevo (Spain) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Almost exactly 50 years ago, on 9 November 1944, the proposals for the establishment of an international organization were published. They were then placed before the San Francisco Conference and subsequently formed the basis of the Charter of the United Nations. These proposals were prepared, as everyone knows, in the Dumbarton Oaks talks, with the participation of delegations from the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and China.

I would point out that the effort that has been undertaken by the General Assembly almost half a century later has not emanated from such a small group of States but, on the contrary, involves the totality of the membership of the United Nations.

I wish to begin by expressing my delegation's gratitude to Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana for the devotion and hard work with which, as President of the General Assembly, he presided over the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council. Our gratitude goes, too, to the Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group, Ambassador Wilhelm Breitenstein of Finland and Ambassador Chew Tai Soo of Singapore, who also made noteworthy contributions to the progress of our work.

Since last year, when the General Assembly decided in its resolution 48/26 to set up the Working Group, progress has undeniably been made. The Working Group has held many meetings and has heard the views of many Member States on all the issues, which have thus been clearly identified. All these statements are a very valuable basis for our continued work, as are the documents prepared by the Secretariat and by the Chairman of the Working Group, Ambassador Insanally, and the written inputs from several delegations or groups of delegations.

As the report of the Working Group states

> "While there was a convergence of views that the membership of the Security Council should be enlarged, there was also agreement that the scope and nature of such enlargement require further discussion." *(A/48/47, para. 8)*

So we still need to go into greater depth and discuss further the scope of this area of convergence.

Last year the Spanish delegation outlined the principles on the basis of which, in its view, the reform of the Security Council should be approached: representativeness, effectiveness and transparency. We should also bear in mind that the final objective of the reform must be to strengthen the legitimacy of the Security Council's activities. These principles and this objective are still fully valid. With regard to transparency, on the initiative of the members of the Security Council, since last year practical arrangements have been worked out to make it easier for all the Members of the United Nations to follow the work of the Council; those arrangements still need to be refined and updated.

The Council also has before it proposals presented by the delegations of Argentina and New Zealand which, in my delegation's opinion, deserve to be taken into account with a view to improving the Council's monitoring of peace-keeping operations and consultations with troop-contributing States and other States particularly interested in a given situation.

Reform of the Security Council is a tremendously complex issue and should be approached in a well-thought-out way through a process of dialogue that will lead to understanding among all Member States. In an issue of such transcendental importance, consensus is essential.

Spain is in favour of a moderate increase in the membership of the Security Council, an increase that would allow for the more frequent presence in the Council of States whose weight and influence in international affairs is unquestioned and which have the will and the ability to contribute significantly to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the achievement of other purposes of the United Nations as set forth in Article 29 of the Charter.

The expansion of the Council would also facilitate equitable geographical representation, again in accordance with Article 23, thus making it possible for many

medium-sized and small countries that thus far have not been able to do so to take a direct part in the Council's work. In any event, it is essential to maintain the principle enshrined in Article 24 of the Charter that the Security Council acts on behalf of all the Members of the United Nations in carrying out its duties related to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Arystanbekova (Kazakhstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We must also keep in mind that any expansion of the Security Council should go hand in hand with a modification of the majorities required for the adoption of decisions. In this respect we believe that we can distinguish between three categories of issues on which decisions are taken: first, procedural questions; secondly, substantive questions not within the purview of Chapter VII of the Charter — fundamentally, matters relating to the peaceful settlement of disputes; and, thirdly, questions falling within the framework of Chapter VII, which presuppose recourse to enforcement measures.

Each of those categories of actions by the Council would require a different majority, which would be larger if the decision to be taken was more important. This would make it possible to establish that the so-called veto right would be applied only to the third category of decisions: in other words, to those adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter. It should be recalled that a proposal of this kind was made by the United States and the United Kingdom during the Dumbarton Oaks talks, but it was rejected by the Soviet delegation on instructions from Stalin himself.

The Working Group now has an abundance of documentation, including a large number of national replies containing proposals and observations that must still be made more specific. It cannot yet be said that there are areas on which decisions can be taken at this stage. This is indicated by the report of the Working Group itself. Nonetheless, there is sufficient material that, if appropriately structured, could enable us, as we proceed in our work, to identify broad areas of consensus. My delegation takes the view that the present configuration of the Working Group should be retained so that it can continue its deliberations at this forty-ninth session. In view of the large amount of work we must do during this main part of the session, the substantive work of the Working Group might be resumed in 1995, so that all delegations could be on an equal footing and able to participate fully and make their contributions. At the same time, we should keep in mind the need to give the public appropriate information on the work being done.

As to the format for the discussions, we need a new formula that, based on the proposals made at the last session, would make it possible to build on the work already done, without prejudice to the right of those delegations that have not yet expressed their views to do so, when they deem it appropriate, in plenary meetings.

I assure the Assembly that my delegation will continue to take part in the work of the Working Group and to extend the necessary cooperation to the presidency so that we can move towards consensus and reach generally agreed-upon conclusions by the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. To this end, we shall of course need the assistance and participation of all the States Members of the United Nations in a collective endeavour by the whole international community.

Mr. Aita (San Marino): Let me begin by assuring the Assembly that although our delegation's support for almost all of the proposals previously outlined by Ambassador Fulci and elaborated yesterday by Mr. Caputo, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Italy, is not based solely on our great affinity with Italy: our undeniable wealth of traditional culture, our complex economic and financial ties and our common love of freedom, democracy, peace, security, human rights and prosperity.

Yesterday we heard from many delegations that have found the Italian proposal a solid foundation upon which to build. San Marino, which had the opportunity to participate actively in the Working Group on the reform of the Security Council, has paid particular attention to the statements made during yesterday's and today's debates, and we have noted an almost total consensus in three major areas: the Security Council must be enlarged; it must be made more democratic, with particular focus upon transparency and accountability; and it must reflect global political realities, old and new.

The large industrialized States have never really had any problems over representation — or almost anything else. They are big enough and powerful enough to take care of themselves. Medium-sized States, developing or industrialized, have done very well during the last 49 years. We wish them continued luck. Small States, however, have not been as lucky. They comprise about 125 Members and thus constitute the two-thirds majority needed for amendment of the Charter, should amendment

take place. These small States have not had their proportional share of representation on the Security Council. Equitable representation is the main issue; it is the reason for our presence here today, and it led to the formation of the Open-ended Working Group. It is one of the most important issues concerning the small States, including San Marino.

In plain, simple language, small States want a finger in the pie — the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process, to promote and further consolidate the principle of the need to defend all States that cannot militarily defend themselves, and to share the responsibility of advancing the peace and security agenda while ameliorating human rights and increasing prosperity in every corner of the world.

San Marino is a small State, but we proudly declare that our total contribution to the regular United Nations budget is higher per capita than that of all other Member States. We have no oil; our natural resources are small; but San Marino does what is necessary to participate financially in the work of the United Nations, simply because of our deep feeling for the spirit of democracy, which has lived in San Marino for more than 1700 years and which has prompted San Marino to assume its democratic role whenever it can. The Secretary-General addressed the General Assembly on Wednesday, urging Member States that had not done so to pay their dues. He definitely did not have San Marino in mind.

The Italian proposal would give small States 10 non-permanent seats on the Security Council, to be shared by 125 States on a frequent-rotation basis. In view of the considerable number of small States, that proposal is hardly Utopian. Nevertheless it at least guarantees us the enjoyment of our equitable rights approximately once every 22 years, should we opt for two-year tenure. Should we, however, opt for only one year, that right would be exercised in almost half the time, that is, once every 12 years for each of the 125 small States.

As for the election mechanism, that is up to the small States to decide. Either constituency or regional grouping would, in the final analysis, lead to the same results once a 22-year or 12-year frequent rotation schedule was adopted.

With regard to the transparency and democratization of the Security Council, we have repeatedly stated that important consultations held behind closed doors are here to stay. Their abolition does not seem to be realistically feasible. So-called real politics dictates otherwise. Certainly, we do not welcome such consultations wholeheartedly, but by their very delicate nature they are essential in every community, including a democratic one.

On 15 June this year our delegation suggested a stipulation that any proposed amendment to a draft resolution considered in an informal meeting of the Security Council must be made only in writing and be printed immediately in blue, thus allowing every interested party to have access to it. With the blue copy in our hands, we would be in a position, first, to follow the evolution of issues under consideration; secondly, to acquaint ourselves with draft resolutions; and, thirdly, eventually to share to a certain extent in the strength of the decision-making process, while keeping the informal, closed consultation intact. Would not the blue version of any amended draft resolution give us the transparency to which we aspire, without disturbing the imperative need for discreet and even secret negotiations, which are imperatively needed?

Briefings could be carried out by the President of the Security Council regularly, in the presence of the Chairmen of the regional Groups, to acquaint the President of the General Assembly with the Council's workings; it would greatly help us to receive first-hand information on decisions from those who had participated in their making.

Our delegation heard with pleasure the announcement yesterday concerning the renomination of the two Vice-Chairmen of our Open-ended Working Group, Ambassador Breitenstein of Finland and Ambassador Chew of Singapore. They both made remarkable efforts to make our deliberations, within the framework of our mandate, impeccable. When speaking of the two Vice-Chairmen, we must also express our highest esteem to Ambassador Insanally, who as President of the General Assembly, guided us all with his articulate eloquence and reliability.

On several occasions my delegation has expressed a desire to open the doors of our deliberations in the Open-ended Working Group to the media as a serious step towards the further democratization of our work. Nothing similar has been undertaken over the past 50 years, and, most probably, nothing similar will be undertaken for decades to come. I should like to repeat once again that the press, both local and international, are the backbone of our democratic system and constitute an integral part

of our healthy structure. Stimulating reporters, editorialists, commentators and other journalists to criticize our endeavours and comment on our performance may polish and renew our approach and conduce academic institutions to get involved in our work intellectually and academically.

Our yearning to develop transparency in the Security Council will not be truly helped if we keep our own doors closed while we ask the Council to keep its doors open. We should be consistent. We believe in, and are proud of, the presentations we make. We are not and cannot be intimidated by the presence of a journalist, a reporter or a cameraman. Our voices should be heard all over the world, not because we are only too proud of what we are undertaking, but because we owe it to the world to let it carefully watch us as we attempt to reform the most important body humanity has established — the Security Council, which is creating States, obliterating States, moving frontiers and working for world peace and security.

It is incumbent upon the President, and the President alone, to keep the doors of our forthcoming meetings open wide. I should like to conclude by congratulating him on his election. We look forward to seeing him play his role as a leader.

Mr. McKinnon (New Zealand): In the course of this year Member States have had a thorough opportunity to discuss representation on the Security Council and related matters. Those discussions were constructive, frank and detailed. All issues were traversed and all points of view were heard. This, in itself, is useful. We now have a body of debate on which we can draw in future discussions.

The draft resolution before us would provide for the continuation of that discussion at this session and for a further report to be submitted by the Open-ended Working Group before the end of the session. My delegation supports the draft resolution, but we believe that we need to think very clearly about what we should seek to achieve next year. There is very little point in recycling the discussion we had this year.

New Zealand reached certain conclusions from the discussion in the Working Group. These conclusions were set out by the New Zealand Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade in his general debate statement on 27 September. I do not propose to repeat them here. However, they will remain the focus for New Zealand's ongoing consideration of this question.

Various proposals were made in the Assembly's general debate — either specific elements of reform or something approaching a total package. We note in particular the very detailed suggestions set out by the Australian Foreign Minister, Senator Gareth Evans.

In our view, the time has now come for the Working Group to consider concrete proposals for reform. We do not mean that the Working Group should expect to take a decision on such proposals in short order. But concrete proposals will focus the next debate and will help to determine where the consensus might lie.

We say this because, in our view, if we are to make progress, proposals must encompass the totality of the issues that were debated earlier this year. Given the variety of perspectives that Member States bring to this issue, it would make no sense, and would not be acceptable, to seek to deal with the question of expansion in unrelated parts. If for no other reason, such a mode of proceeding could scarcely be construed as equitable. And equity — fairness and balance — are what we are required to achieve.

What does this mean in practice?

First, proposals must deal not only with the question of expansion but also with how that expansion should be distributed, bearing in mind that the Charter has always made provision for a geographical allocation of seats on the Council.

Secondly, proposals should not be made that are narrowly limited with regard to the nature of the expansion they propose. For instance, it would be very unwise for any delegation to propose that the Assembly take action on an increase in the number of permanent members alone. Any attempt at such a process would be doomed to failure at the ratification stage.

Thirdly, given the difficulties that stand in the way of achieving consensus on the question of new permanent members — especially given the near-universal opposition to extending the veto — any concrete proposal, to have a realistic chance of success, needs to contain options for handling the aspirations of those States with an expressed and widely supported interest in relatively regular membership. For my delegation the key to the successful handling of such aspirations is to look at solutions that are regionally based. Different regions have quite different approaches. For some, competitive elections will be the way ahead; others may prefer some form of

intra-regional arrangement on representation. But whatever approach is adopted, we believe that a measure of accountability based on performance should be at the heart of any reform.

Fourthly — a point worth making when we speak of accountability — perhaps any amendment to the Charter should include a provision that no Member State that is in arrears in its financial contributions should expect to be on the Council.

Fifthly, while it is not essential to reconfigure the regional groups as part of this exercise, the Australian proposal demonstrates why we might need to do so. This suggests that any comprehensive proposal will need to take account of that aspect.

Sixthly, to move forward we shall need to examine, in the context of concrete proposals, other necessary adjustments to the Charter. For example, if we were to remove the prohibition against the immediate re-election of non-permanent members would there be a need for the insertion, instead, of some alternative provision, such as a rule that no non-permanent member should be elected to serve more than four years out of six or eight years out of 10?

Finally, I need to address the second but no less important limb of the Working Group's mandate and of our draft resolution — the "related matters". For my delegation, reforming the way the Security Council operates is every bit as important as reforming its membership. Indeed, New Zealand suggests that, even if we were able to achieve the perfect size and balance, we would still have almost all the problems we have today unless the members of the new Security Council changed the Council's ways of doing business.

I am not going to repeat what we have said in the Working Group, where we reviewed the useful improvements that have already been made in Security Council practice — which we applaud — and the very many more changes that need to be made in the near future.

New Zealand feels some small sense of accomplishment in that, along with a number of like-minded colleagues on the Security Council, it has played a role in beginning to make the necessary changes. But we have some very important unfinished business. I am referring to the urgent need for reform in the Security Council's practice in respect of consultation with countries contributing troops to peace-keeping operations and with regional countries. Together with Argentina, we have circulated in the Security Council a draft resolution on this subject.

We are working very hard to achieve consensus on this proposal. We value the very wide support and encouragement that has been forthcoming from the members of the General Assembly, and we would appreciate further such input.

Mr. Kharrazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): As one of the principal organs of the United Nations, the Security Council has had conferred on it by the Members of the Organization responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Unfortunately, the Council was unable to play the role expected of it, especially during the cold war era, when bloc rivalries were the most prominent characteristic of international relations.

Moreover, the exercise of the veto by the permanent members, in the service of their self-interests at the expense of global peace, moved the Council in a direction which, on numerous occasions — threats to peace, breaches of the peace or acts of aggression — prevented it from acting on behalf of the entire membership of the Organization.

However, new international circumstances have created added responsibilities for the United Nations, and this fact makes it all the more imperative that the Security Council be reformed to enable it to discharge its duties in a more efficient and effective manner.

During the past year the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council considered some aspects of reform of the Council. In our view — and this is something that has been said by others — the current composition of the Security Council does not represent the general membership of the United Nations. At present, the indications are that developed countries are over-represented while the developing countries are under-represented. That being the case, every effort should be made to ensure equitable and balanced representation in the Council. The new composition of the Council should be based on the sovereign equality of States and on equitable regional representation.

While enlargement of the Security Council is a matter of importance, it is not an end in itself but a means of improving the ways in which the Council shoulders its responsibilities. More important, the Council's working methods and procedures, as well as its decision-making process, need to be improved. In this regard, my delegation wishes to underline several points.

First, the Security Council has failed to adopt a balanced approach in dealing with different crises, and some permanent members have persisted in the application of double standards. This is inimical to the credibility and legitimacy of the Council. One vivid example in this regard is the Council's approach to the aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Council's questionable handling of the crisis.

Secondly, while my delegation recognizes the need for the holding of appropriate informal consultations among members of the Council, some mechanism should be devised to inform, and if required consult with, non-members of the Council. Since the Council's effectiveness is intertwined with the commitment of the Member States, it is essential to retain the moral legitimacy of the Council by ensuring the participation of Member States in the decision-making process. It is unfortunate to note that in some cases even non-permanent members of the Council are not consulted.

Thirdly, a new balance should be struck between the General Assembly and the Security Council to fill the existing gap between the general membership and the Council. In this context, the jurisdiction and prerogative of the General Assembly with respect to international peace and security should not be overlooked. Moreover, on the basis of Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter, the Security Council should submit annual reports to the General Assembly for its consideration. It goes without saying that the Council should present comprehensive and analytical reports to the Assembly rather than a compilation of document symbols and references.

Fourthly, veto power is incompatible with the objective of democratizing the United Nations. This power, which has lost its *raison d'être*, must therefore be removed or at least drastically revised and brought into line with the reform of the United Nations so that a democratic process of decision-making may be achieved. As my Foreign Minister pointed out before this General Assembly, just two weeks ago:

> "If we are sincere in our belief that the world is so changed that we must eliminate all references to 'enemy States' from the Charter, then why not also acknowledge that there is no further justification for holding on to privileges granted to the war victors of that time?" *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 5th meeting, p. 38)*

In conclusion, my delegation pledges its full cooperation in the work of the Open-ended Working Group. It is our hope that the Group's work will be transparent and that there will not just be a predetermined formula presented to the membership as a whole for approval.

Mr. Martinez Blanco (Honduras) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I am highly honoured to speak on behalf of the countries of Central America: Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama.

Central America has been following the question of equitable representation on, and increase in, the membership of the Security Council since the item was first included in the programme of work of the General Assembly, in 1979.

This issue, which is now included in the agenda of this current session of the General Assembly as item 33, was already a subject of consideration in the course of the forty-eighth session of this Assembly. Indeed, by its resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General, which reflected the view of a number of Member States on the item in question. Our region notes with gratitude the report presented by the Open-ended Working Group on equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council — document A/48/47, dated 2 September 1994.

That report gives a brief account of the work carried out, but it does not offer any conclusions or state any tangible results achieved on this issue. It is our hope that some agreement or understanding on this matter will be reached shortly.

Equitable representation on the Security Council and an increase in its membership — as has been clearly reflected in the statements made by the Heads of State, heads of delegations and Ministers of Foreign Affairs who have addressed the General Assembly at this session — are the unanimous desire of the international

community. Reform of the Security Council is urgent: this fact is reflected in the documents issued by the Opened-ended Working Group established by the President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session and in the meetings of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as by all the various international forums at which this issue has been addressed.

Thus, as the States of Central America see it, it is necessary to revise the membership of the Security Council on the basis of the principle of equitable geographical distribution — which will make it possible to increase the number of permanent and non-permanent members on the most democratic basis possible — while studying the desirability of creating a new category of semi-permanent members, as suggested in the Open-ended Working Group. At the same time, thought needs to be given to the basic indicators that would enable us to establish, in an appropriate way, the number of members.

Equitable representation for the States Members of the United Nations is all the more important in that, in accordance with the Charter, the decisions taken by the Security Council are taken on behalf of all Member States, even though all Member States are represented only in the General Assembly. For this reason, the Security Council should achieve greater coordination and transparency in its activities in order to prevent a situation in which it would have primacy over other organs of the United Nations.

The Central American States take the view that a Security Council with equitable and democratic representation would place our Organization in a better position to fulfil its purposes and principles, and would thus give greater legitimacy to its decisions, which aim essentially at ensuring the maintenance of international peace and security, respect for human rights and protection of the environment.

It is our hope that genuine and thorough reform of the Security Council, grounded in democratic principles of equitable geographical distribution of seats, would provide for greater participation in the work of the Council for all Members of the United Nations, including small States and, in general, all those States that have never had the opportunity to participate in the Council's work. From this standpoint, the proposals put forward by a number of eminent persons at the current session of the General Assembly are extremely useful. Once they have been carefully studied, they may well serve as the basis for a text that reflects the objectives we all seek to achieve.

The countries of the Central American region believe that any reform formula that is adopted should, in any event, go hand in hand with corresponding reform to the Charter of the Organization and at the same time provide for the total and absolute removal of the right of veto, a right currently enjoyed by the five permanent members.

The right of veto should not be granted to any State in any circumstances, whether they may be called permanent or semi-permanent members, for that right is an anachronism which 50 years ago may perhaps have had some logical justification, since the world was just awakening from the nightmare of the Second World War. But at the present time, now that the cold war is over, the right of veto no longer has any justification or *raison d'être*. Its total and utter removal will serve fully to safeguard the principle of the sovereign equality of States Members of this Organization, contained in Article 2 (1) of the Charter.

Some months ago, the Secretary-General proposed "An Agenda for Peace", and recently he has set forth the principles that should form the basis of "An Agenda for Development". International conferences addressing various economic, social and humanitarian questions have been held at the highest level. It is in this context that we believe that the highest political decision-making body of our Organization should be democratized, and reflect the new state of affairs prevailing today.

On 31 January 1992, a summit meeting of the Security Council was held. Heads of State or Government and Foreign Ministers at that meeting, particularly those of the permanent members of the Council, undertook to strengthen the work of the Organization and to make it effective in order to act rapidly, firmly and impartially. But in practice, the results of that meeting have been fairly meagre, and the credibility of the Organization has quite often been questioned. The next Security Council summit meeting to be held early in 1995 and the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization provide us with an opportunity to reaffirm and bolster its role, in particular the role of the Security Council, in order to realize mankind's aspirations to peace, security and sustainable development.

In conclusion, the Central American States — the Republics of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama — reaffirm their view that after 50 years of existence a serious and thorough review of the Charter of the United Nations is called for,

particularly where the Security Council is concerned, in order to adapt it to the times in which we live.

Mr. Cassar (Malta): Allow me at the outset to congratulate the President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Malta fondly recalls the service of Côte d'Ivoire on the Security Council 30 years ago when, in 1964, Malta became a Member of the United Nations.

This session of the Assembly is particularly fortunate in having the current President presiding over the discussion of this item, particularly in view of his experience as President of the Security Council in January 1990, and as representative of his country during Côte d'Ivoire's second term on the Council. On both occasions, Côte d'Ivoire served the international community with great dedication.

Service on the Security Council is an onerous task, which Malta shared when it served during its term in 1983-1984.

Emerging from the cold-war era with an authority and effectiveness that belie its many years of sterility, the Security Council is also, however, clearly in need of functional reform. Addressing this issue at the Institute of International Relations in Budapest earlier this year, Malta's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Guido de Marco, stated that

> "Any consideration of reform of the Security Council, be this in terms of composition or of the working methods, is surrounded by the legitimate concern that no proposed action should impair its existing vitality. The real dilemma lies, however, in the fact that its present course of action could, if it remains unsupported by some measure of reform, itself lead to an undermining of this vitality".

This is the principal criterion that has guided the delegation of Malta in its approach to the discussion on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

Conscious as it is of the legitimate concern that no proposed action should impair the Council's existing vitality, my Government ascribes great importance to this debate for the future evolution of the United Nations.

Notwithstanding the complex issues involved, we have made a good start and notable progress. Under the able chairmanship of the President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Insanally, and his two Vice-Chairmen, the Open-ended Working Group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993 held 22 meetings.

Delegations, my own included, engaged in frank and constructive discussions and expressed themselves on all items under consideration by the Working Group, including the relationship of the Security Council with the General Assembly, the regional distribution on the Council, the categories of membership and the Security Council's working methods, procedures and decision-making.

In deciding to establish the Open-ended Working Group, General Assembly resolution 48/26 recalls that the Members of the United Nations confer on the Security Council

> "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and agree that in carrying out its duty under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf".

The need to review the membership of the Security Council and related matters was recognized in view of the substantial increase in the membership of the United Nations as well as the changes in international relations. Bearing in mind the need to continue to enhance the efficiency of the Security Council, the Assembly reaffirmed the principle of the sovereign equality of all Members of the United Nations.

My Government feels that equitable representation is primarily linked to a qualitative, rather than quantitative, change in the relationship between the Council and the rest of the United Nations membership.

The present ongoing debate has already generated some beneficial developments in this regard. My delegation, like others, welcomes the improvements made to date, such as daily publication in the *Journal* of the provisional agenda; the monthly circulation of the Council's tentative forecast of its programme of work; the availability of Security Council draft resolutions in "blue" at the same time Council members receive them; and the briefings by the President of the Security Council to the President of the General Assembly and the Chairmen of the regional groups.

Another important and welcome development is the Security Council's more elaborate consultations with

present and potential troop contributors on different aspects of peace-keeping operations. This practice — particularly beneficial prior to the setting up of a peace-keeping operation — could be of inspiration in fostering consultations with interested parties on other issues on which the Security Council may decide.

Important as they are, these changes on their own do not resolve the wider question, that is, whether the rest of the United Nations membership should remain a passive, however well-informed, bystander at the Council's deliberations.

There is good cause to believe that both a reasonable increase in the membership of the Security Council and an appraisal and review of the rights of its members would constitute positive measures of reform. The Security Council was expanded from 11 to 15 members in 1965 to reflect the growth in United Nations membership from the original 51 to 113. Malta believes that further expansion of the Security Council is now warranted in order to reflect today's United Nations membership of 184 States.

At the same time, we believe, as do others, that one of the major strengths of the Security Council lies in its limited membership. For this reason, my delegation would support a prudent increase of not more than 10 seats.

An increase in Security Council membership would still leave the vast majority of United Nations Member States outside this inner circle. It is therefore in terms of the manner in which this inner circle, however constituted, is seen to act in response to the concerns of the wider membership that the most urgent measures relating to the Security Council must be contemplated. In this context, the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly assumes far-reaching importance.

A revitalized General Assembly gains greater authority and credibility as it increasingly transforms itself into the effective organ through which the necessary collective input into the deliberations of other components of the United Nations system, not least the Security Council, could be made. This enhanced symbiotic relationship is positive in itself in that it helps ward off situations of possible dissonance between these two main organs.

Addressing an experts' meeting at the Foundation for International Studies in Valletta to discuss the theme "A Second-Generation United Nations", my Foreign Minister last week stressed the need for enhanced cooperation between the Security Council and the General Assembly. Professor de Marco cautioned against

> "a situation where the thinking of the Security Council could be in divergence with that of the General Assembly. If this happens, the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Security Council will be put into doubt".

In this spirit, we welcome the adoption of General Assembly resolution 48/264 on 17 August 1994 entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly", and in particular operative paragraph 4, which invites the President of the General Assembly

> "to propose appropriate ways and means to facilitate an in-depth discussion by the Assembly of matters contained in the reports submitted to it by the Security Council."

An increase in the membership of the Security Council could only enhance the existing confidence of the broader United Nations membership in its decisions and would further buttress the Council's authority.

The membership issue and the question of the status of different members on the Security Council have assumed predominance throughout our deliberations in the Open-ended Working Group.

If there is a linear expansion of the existing categories of the Council, we shall be comforted by the knowledge of a working method which we have witnessed to date. Like any other gradual, quantitative evolution, however, it has its merits and its drawbacks.

On the other hand, the introduction of new categories of membership is challenging, and, like any challenge, at one and the same time stimulates our institutional creativity but generates that sense of cautious awareness necessarily encountered when formulating new mechanisms.

My Government is giving serious thought and consideration to the whole range of proposals submitted to date. We all are conscious of our grave responsibility. The reforms we will ultimately adopt will be as long-lasting as they are equitable and able to reflect a constantly evolving international reality.

Like others, we have expressed the hope that through the full cooperation of all Member States, the

Working Group will endeavour to conclude its work by next year in order to make its results coincide with the fiftieth anniversary. This is a time-frame that should encourage us in seeking common ground on which to build constructively — not an ever-shortening fuse to force upon us solutions of which we may not be fully convinced. In our deliberations, we must constantly ensure that form follows substance, rather than vice versa.

Any reform, be it in terms of composition or of working methods, while reflecting more accurately the current international situation, must continue to make the work of the Security Council more transparent but retain within the Council that quality of *realpolitik* that is a basic ingredient of inter-State relations.

My delegation pledges its full cooperation in the endeavours of the Working Group. A firm commitment to the principles of the Charter should inspire us in this debate as it does in others. Our interest must remain that of ensuring "prompt and effective action by the United Nations" in the "maintenance of international peace and security".

Mr. Ould Ely (Mauritania) *(interpretation from French):* Since this is the first time I have spoken before the Assembly in my new capacity as Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, may I be allowed to say how pleased and honoured I am to see Mr. Amara Essy presiding over the Assembly's work at this session. His country, Côte d'Ivoire, where I had the privilege to serve, is for us Mauritanians a model of wisdom and moderation and a resolute champion in the promotion of the ideals of peace, solidarity and cooperation embodied in our Organization.

The question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters, which is the subject of today's debate, is without any doubt an important matter that requires sustained efforts and a convergence of views that can enable us to attain the objectives we all desire. In this context, we welcome the progress already made in this area under the chairmanship of President Essy's predecessor, Ambassador Samuel Insanally, with the assistance of Vice-Chairmen Wilhelm Breitenstein of Finland and Chew Tai Soo of Singapore.

We also salute the intention of the President of the General Assembly at this session to continue this effort with the assistance of the same team. Such continuity will no doubt make it possible for us to speed up our work and keep it on the right path. As always, Mauritania will make a positive contribution to our common endeavour.

The end of the cold war, the many developments that have taken place on the international scene, the substantial increase in United Nations activities in the areas of peace and security and the growing universality of the Organization clearly require us now to adapt our structures and methods of work to these circumstances. In view of the changes that have taken place in our governing bodies over recent years, the Security Council should not be excluded from the modifications made necessary by the new international situation. This is why we have always supported and will continue to support efforts aimed at both expanding the Council's membership so that it can reflect the realities of today's world and making it more able to deal effectively with the many challenges it faces.

There is no doubt that both the universality of our Organization and the Charter itself, which in Article 24 confers on the Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, call for the Council to act swiftly and effectively and also to take into account the interests of all States, without distinction. This is why the question of equitable representation is of crucial importance. Indeed, since the Council acts on behalf of the States Members of the Organization and its decisions are binding on them, it is essential that it be seen as an entity whose legitimacy, equity and credibility are beyond all doubt. Hence, enlarging the Council can only strengthen it by enabling it to respond effectively and appropriately to present-day realities. In this light, the Council should reflect all currents of thought and all geographical regions of the world.

The membership of the Council is a key issue, but its operation and its methods of work are no less important; they, too, need to be adapted to new realities. In this context, we welcome the measures already agreed on concerning its methods of work, particularly the timely adoption and presentation of reports to the General Assembly. However, we believe that further work must be done to establish more effective cooperation and coordination with the General Assembly on a more solid and consistent basis, because the General Assembly is still the forum in which all States can freely and democratically express their views. The largest possible number of States must be able to participate in the decision-making process, and this also calls for greater transparency, which is always the foundation of democracy and accountability.

Like the vast majority of Members of our Organization, my country subscribes to the idea of a broadly representative, transparent and democratic Security Council. This is why we believe it is essential for the Open-ended Working Group on this issue to continue its efforts to discharge the mandate entrusted to it under resolution 48/26, adopted at the General Assembly's last session. We hope that at the fiftieth session the Working Group will submit to us a detailed and comprehensive report that justifies our efforts. We have no doubt that the upcoming summit of the countries members of the Security Council, to be held in January next year, will provide new impetus for our work in this area. May our efforts meet with great success.

Mr. Shambos (Cyprus): I would like at the outset to express our deep appreciation to Ambassador Insanally of Guyana, who chaired the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council, and to welcome the report of the Working Group.

Since its admission to the United Nations in 1960, Cyprus has consistently been a strong supporter of the United Nations, whose principles and objectives form the cornerstone of our foreign policy.

Being a small country, we entrust our security and our very existence to the United Nations. We want to see it further strengthened and the spheres of its activities expanded. We believe that in this emerging new world order it is more necessary than ever that the United Nations be capable of fulfilling the role entrusted to it by the Charter as the guarantor of peace, security and social justice in the world.

It is against this background that we consider that improvements to the effectiveness and credibility of the decision-making organ of the United Nations are both urgent and compelling. The Security Council, which the Charter entrusts with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, needs to undergo quantitative changes corresponding to the dramatic increase of the membership of the United Nations, as well as qualitative adjustments to the method of its work that will maintain the democratic processes which form the basis of the United Nations.

The Security Council is indeed faced with enormous tasks. Its mandatory decisions, which are binding on all Members and have immense impact on millions of people, must be reached in such a way as to reflect fully the wishes and positions of the United Nations membership and the international community. Expansion of the Security Council is therefore imperative, while the qualitative changes referred to above are indispensable. Expansion alone, however, will not solve every problem. There must be accountability in the membership and strict and objective persistence in the implementation of its resolutions and the openness of its operations.

Several most useful ideas have emerged during this debate and in the discussions of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council. In the context of greater transparency in the Security Council's decision-making processes, various measures have been suggested. We consider most of these proposals, and particularly that concerning the participation of non-members in the informal consultations of the Council, to be extremely important. For we should not forget that, under the prevailing conditions and procedures, inadequate transparency has led to bitter experiences, to say the least, for many, including my country. We look forward to the intensification of these discussions during the present session. We believe that any enlargement must take into consideration equitable geographical representation as well as the need to increase the transparency of its work and — I repeat — its accountability to the wider membership.

While the matter of increase in the membership of the Security Council is pressing, final decisions as to its enlargement must be carefully weighed and fully debated. Any hasty treatment of this most serious subject will not provide a just solution to this issue. The reform and expansion of the Security Council should include measures geared to reforming its working methods and procedures. There is also a need to enhance the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly in accordance with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter.

Non-selectivity, impartiality and absolute and genuine respect for the sovereign equality of States should be the guiding standards in the process of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. Genuine adherence to and a proven record in upholding the provisions and promoting the principles of the Charter should be a determining factor in the whole process.

In conclusion, may I also recall the words of President Clerides before this body on 3 October:

> "the effectiveness of the most powerful organ of the United Nations is seriously compromised if it applies double standards. It must act in every case with determination and consistency. The record of its performance indicates clearly that in those cases where the international community has shown steadfastness to defend the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and fully to implement its provisions, peace and justice was achieved. On the contrary, in those cases where unity of purpose had not been exhibited or the interests of nations or alliances had been placed above the universal principles and the rule of law, the problems remain and peace is elusive." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 14th meeting, p. 2)*

Mr. Remirez de Estenoz Barciela (Cuba) *(interpretation from Spanish):* There can be no doubt whatsoever that the question before us is one of the most significant and important of this session, a fact that has been forcefully confirmed by the many references to the need for democracy in the Security Council in the statements of almost every delegation in the recently concluded general debate and by the impressive number of delegations who have spoken on this subject before me.

We hope that the opinions expressed here will be useful to the Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly created for this issue when it resumes its work in January next year. In 1994, the Working Group has held a useful albeit general exchange of views under the wise and capable leadership of Ambassador Samuel Insanally, Permanent Representative of Guyana, and the Permanent Representatives of Singapore and Finland, whom we thank for a job well done.

The Chairman of the Movement of Non-aligned Countries has already spoken on this item on behalf of the members of the Movement. Allow me, first of all, to express my delegation's full support of his statement, which fully reflects the spirit prevailing not only at the Jakarta Summit but also in the Ministerial Meetings of the non-aligned countries that took place in Cairo and New York this year. We feel that it is nevertheless appropriate to outline some clarifications of Cuba's position on this issue.

Cuba considers that the necessary restructuring of the Security Council has a variety of closely interwoven aspects which are part and parcel of the same comprehensive process. I am referring to the increase in the membership of the Council on the one hand and to the strict application of the principle of equitable geographic distribution on the other, as well as to the introduction of reforms that would enhance transparency in the Council's work and ensure that it restrict itself to the powers and prerogatives conferred upon it by the Charter.

Of course, another integral part of this complex process is the revitalization of the General Assembly and, above all, the re-establishment of appropriate links between the Assembly and the Council, making the latter duly accountable to the former, as provided for in the Charter. It should be recalled that, in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter, the Security Council acts on behalf of all Members of this Organization and is accountable to them. Thus, the General Assembly, as the only United Nations body in which all Member States participate, has the right and duty to be duly informed of the activities of the Council and to make whatever recommendations it considers necessary.

In his statement, the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement examined the historical relationship between the way in which the total membership of the Organization and that of the Security Council have evolved, clearly showing that the present proportions leave a great deal to be desired and must be substantially changed.

But, in my country's view, such change must be based, for all categories of membership, on strict application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, which must be the fundamental criterion for determining which countries should be members of the Council. Hence, Cuba supports not only a substantial increase in non-permanent seats for the three regions of developing countries, but also the granting of permanent membership to two countries in Africa, two countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, and two developing countries in Asia, which would bring us closer to the equitable geographical distribution we advocate. In this context, we fully share the view of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries that any predetermined selection that excludes non-aligned and other developing countries would be unacceptable.

Of course, we are ready to consider thoroughly and flexibly the numerous formulas that have been proposed both in the Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly and during the general debate at this session, including the creation of new categories of Security Council membership. We believe that consideration of these issues should be exhaustive and complete, and even if it takes some time we hope no one will yield to the temptation of trying to shorten the process by seeking a ruling from the General Assembly before conditions are sufficiently ripe and without having achieved the necessary consensus on formulas for increasing the membership of the Security Council.

That some regions are over-represented in the Security Council while others are under-represented is without question detrimental to the interests of the Council itself and to the Council's authority and credibility. In our view, in the light of the increasing importance it has acquired in recent years, it is in the Council's own interest that there should be a maximal democratization of its composition and structures. Increasing the Council's representativeness would lend it greater legitimacy.

But, it must be clear that an increase in membership alone would not be sufficient to ensure this legitimacy. As part of the same negotiating package, we must also take account of the question of the Council's working methods and procedures. We believe that the Council would also gain practical benefits from wide-ranging reform in these important areas, and that it should be in the interest of Council members also to hold increasingly broad consultations with non-members to keep them informed of the Council's activities and involve them in the work of the Council as much as possible. In that way, the Council would not only be responding adequately to the continued appeals for transparency increasingly voiced in this Organization, but would also be improving the Council's image in the eyes of the international community and increasing its effectiveness by making its decisions more legitimate and credible.

We recognize that in the past two years measures have been taken to improve the level of information available to States non-members of the Council, but much remains to be done. As measures in this area would not require Charter reforms but only changes in the operating methods of the Council, we think that it would be appropriate to move forward in this field simultaneously with the Open-ended Working Group's negotiations on equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Council.

In the Final Document it adopted during its recent ministerial meeting held in Cairo, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries included a set of proposals on reform of the functioning of the Security Council, proposals that have been reiterated in this debate by the Chairman of the Movement and by other colleagues. In our view, these should be duly taken into account in this process of restructuring the Council.

Of course, a salient feature of the Council's procedures is the question of the anachronistic veto, whether exercised openly or covertly. My country's position on this issue is very well known and I will not repeat it here.

As I said before, the Charter provisions regulating the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly should be fully restored; the leading role of the Assembly should be recognized. In this context, we must refer to the annual report of the Security Council and how it should be presented, an issue to which the non-aligned countries have repeatedly referred and which we shall address later in the session when the subject is dealt with at the session. Nor can we ignore the provisions of the Charter that allow the General Assembly to make recommendations to the Council regarding its structure and methods of operation. In Cuba's view, this important aspect should be discussed until we reach solutions that are satisfactory to all.

This has been a brief summary of my country's position on this item; these are in full accord with those endorsed by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. We are ready to continue working in the Assembly's Open-ended Working Group, and I assure members that we will spare no effort to reach consensus solutions reflecting the vital interest of the international community in making the Security Council as democratic as possible.

Mr. Nobilo (Croatia): I take this opportunity to convey my delegation's deep appreciation to Ambassador Samuel Insanally, who, as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, led the Working Group on this item, and to the Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group, Ambassador Breitenstein and Ambassador Chew. Thanks to their wise leadership, we have made great advances on this subject.

As we approach the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, it is only appropriate that we should intensify our analysis of the functioning of the United Nations and seriously consider possible reforms

with a view to improving its work. In this regard, the present debate concerning the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, and related matters, is timely and pertinent.

This is particularly true since the Security Council is the organ of the United Nations which has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and which, in carrying out its duties, acts on behalf of Member States. Therefore, any discussion of the composition and functioning of the Security Council is of extreme importance and should be approached with all the necessary gravity and seriousness and in a manner which takes into consideration global interests and not just the individual interests of States.

In terms of its composition, permanent membership of the Security Council should not be limited to the coalition of the victors of the Second World War or to the nuclear club of the super-Powers. New political and economic realities must be taken into account and due regard must be given to ensuring a proper geographical balance as well as to the increase in the membership of the United Nations. Due to their firm adherence to democratic principles and to their active and valuable involvement in the interest of maintaining international peace and security, Croatia is of the opinion that Germany and Japan deserve to be permanent members of the Security Council.

Furthermore, we hold that developing countries should be better represented in the Security Council, not only as a result of their number and broad geographical distribution, but because of the political and economic influence of many of these countries and the constructive role which they have played in international affairs, including peace-keeping. Serious consideration should be given to granting permanent member status to one or more of these countries or to establishing a system whereby certain regionally influential States should be allowed to sit in the Security Council more often. Of course, Croatia would respect the decision reached by the developing States as to how they prefer to be better represented in the Council.

My delegation also wishes to reiterate the need to keep the interests of small States in mind when considering the enlargement of the Security Council. In keeping with the principle of sovereign equality of States, we are of the opinion that a mechanism should be established by which small States are guaranteed a voice in the Council through a balanced rotation of non-permanent seats.

Any enlargement of the Council must be done in such a way as not to impair the efficiency of its work. It is obvious that the Security Council, regardless of its size, may be inefficient if there is no political will to make important decisions or if action is blocked by a veto or threatened veto by one or more of its permanent members. However, practical experience leads us to conclude that any large increase in the membership of the Council could lead to inefficiency in its work by overloading it with the ballast of oversized bureaucracy. Therefore, it is important to increase membership by an amount by which the efficiency of the Council will not be sacrificed in order to make it more representative. In this light, it is our opinion that the increase in membership should be done in such a way as to ensure that the total number of members of the Security Council does not exceed 25.

In addition to the issue of the composition of the Security Council, other important matters relating to the work of the Council deserve full consideration. Among these is the issue of the power of the veto. The Republic of Croatia wishes to reiterate its general position that there should be a limitation of the right and practice of the veto. However, since it is unlikely that the power of veto will soon be abolished, the Republic of Croatia is of the view that the proposal of requiring at least two vetoes to be cast in order to nullify a Security Council resolution deserves serious consideration. This proposal is even more appropriate in a Security Council with an increased number of permanent members.

Transparency in the work of the Security Council is also of great concern for the Republic of Croatia. While we applaud recent improvements which have increased the transparency of the Council, it is our firm opinion that much more can be done in this regard. A better method of communicating information on the deliberations in the informal consultations should be devised. Also, we view with favour the proposal that documents made available to the Security Council, as well as summaries of informal consultations, should be made available to interested Member States.

Croatia also supports improvement in the cooperation between the only body in which all Member States are represented — the General Assembly — and the Security Council. In this regard, regular briefings by the President of the Security Council to the General Assembly would be helpful.

My delegation also fully agrees that there is a need for greater consultation by the Security Council with troop-contributing countries, with third countries affected by sanctions and with States situated in regions experiencing conflict. However, we also wish to stress the need for greater consultations by the Council with troop-hosting States — that is, States which have allowed United Nations peace-keeping forces on their territory — as these are among the States which are most affected by Council decisions.

In conclusion, we wish to address the issue of effectiveness of the Security Council. The Republic of Croatia is situated in a crisis region which has so far been the source of more than 70 Security Council resolutions — all in the last three years. Yet many of these resolutions have not been implemented or have only been partially implemented. We wish to stress that for the Security Council to be effective it must ensure that its resolutions are fully implemented — not only in our region, but in general. Otherwise, not only may there be a loss of credibility of the Security Council and the United Nations, but the very principles of allowable international behaviour which have been formed in the last 50 years, and the very values which the international community has committed itself to, may seriously be at stake.

Mr. Valencia Rodriguez (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish):* The question now before us has been thoroughly discussed by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, of which Ecuador is a member. I wish to add a few brief comments.

First, may I convey my delegation's congratulations to Ambassadors Insanally, Breitenstein and Chew, the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen respectively of the Working Group established by the General Assembly to address this question. The work done by the Working Group permitted a broad-ranging exchange of views aimed at ensuring better functioning of the Security Council in such a way that its activities, on behalf of all Members of the Organization, may strengthen its credibility and reaffirm its legitimacy.

A broad range of helpful proposals have been made in the course of the Group's work. We hope that during this session we can build consensus on the fundamental issues so that the decisions taken at the end of the negotiating process may receive the support of all delegations.

Ecuador supports the initiatives aimed at ensuring greater transparency in the work of the Council, including establishing a system of regular consultations with States affected by a given conflict, with troop-contributing States and with regional groups, as well as the establishment of machinery allowing for a more fluid relationship between the Assembly and the Council, so that the Council's activities may reflect the majority view of the Organization. The practice of holding informal consultations behind closed door tends to diminish trust in the activities of the Council.

As part of this endeavour to improve the Council's procedures, it is essential to address the question of the veto, a mechanism that we have repeatedly repudiated as anti-democratic. I refer members to document A/48/264 at page 36. Other delegations have already discussed in detail the historical factors underlying the adoption of that practice and the reasons that now prompt us to restrict it and eventually abolish it. A number of different formulas have been offered, ranging from determining issues on which the veto could not be used to requiring that the veto be exercised only if two States that were entitled to do so cast vetoes.

I am sure that the broad range of the proposals that have been made will enable the Working Group to find acceptable formulas which will strike a balance between the rights of the permanent members and the pressing need for the Council to act in strict conformity with Article 24 of the Charter so that national interests, however powerful, are properly coordinated with the common aims of mankind represented here.

Ecuador's legal tradition is the same as that of the rest of Latin America. It is a tradition that regards law as the basis for relations between States. Thus we are concerned at the trend that has developed in practice in the Council of widening, at its discretion, the powers vested in it by the Charter. The argument that the Council is a political body cannot exempt it from adhering to the norms of international law, particularly now when there is an increasing number of inter-State conflicts and many changes on the world scene. For this reason Ecuador is inclined to favour the proposals that the Security Council should act under constitutional control, in conformity with the mechanisms that are regarded as appropriate.

The Assembly will be called upon at the proper time to take decisions on the way in which the Council works and on its enlargement. Ecuador recognizes and supports the legitimate aspirations of countries such as Germany, Brazil and Japan and countries of Asia and Africa to be represented on the Council as permanent members. These

aspirations should be considered in the context of the need to respect equitable geographical distribution for all regions and the imbalance that currently exists in favour of one region, both among the permanent and among the non-permanent members. My delegation is extremely flexible in this regard and has considered with interest the alternative proposals presented by various delegations, for example Italy, which we believe can pave the way to the desired consensus.

Ecuador believes that the necessary reorganization of the Council cannot be carried out simply by increasing the number of its permanent or non-permanent members. We are convinced that if negotiations go on simultaneously on the questions of the functioning of the Council and the enlargement of its membership, and if a comprehensive approach is taken that avoids reducing the debate to mere arithmetics or to an attempt to solve problems in the short term, the Working Group will be able to adopt changes that will lay the foundation for a Security Council equipped to tackle the difficult challenges it will face in the immediate future.

Mr. Rahman (Bangladesh): My delegation associates itself with the tributes paid to Ambassador Insanally, Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council, and its two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Breitenstein of Finland and Ambassador Chew Tai Soo of Singapore.

We welcome the recommendation that the Open-ended Working Group continue its work, taking into account views expressed at the forty-ninth session, and submit a report to the General Assembly before the end of the session.

Our priority objective remains to forge a meaningful consensus for much-needed reform and restructuring of the Security Council in a comprehensive manner that would make it more representative, credible and legitimate; strengthen its relations with other organs, especially the General Assembly; and improve its methods of working and procedures so that it would be more efficient, effective, transparent and accountable.

Over the past year we have entered into a sustained process of dialogue and discussion on a progressively substantive basis, highlighting the importance attached by Member States to this issue. Background papers have been compiled by the Secretariat on views expressed in writing or orally since the forty-seventh and forty-eighth sessions and on substantive discussions on six cluster issues from March to May 1994. Since then, follow-up discussions in June, the non-paper of the President of the General Assembly, views expressed by Indonesia as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, and statements by individual countries at the forty-ninth session have all provided a considered body of opinion on this subject-matter.

Bangladesh's viewpoints have also been articulated in the course of this exercise. We would briefly like to highlight the following.

First and foremost, there is palpable recognition of the need for change in the Security Council to make it conform to a radically transformed world community and world situation. The approach, in our opinion, must be holistic and comprehensive in nature, touching on both its membership and its mandate.

Secondly, there seems to be a universal convergence of views that the membership of the Council should be enlarged. However, differences still persist on the scope, composition and nature of such an expansion. A central dilemma relates to increasing the permanent membership. We are confronted with balancing conflicting principles touching on the sovereign equality of Member States and the democratization of the United Nations, and the Non-Aligned Movement's considered position opposed to the perpetuation of current inequalities through the creation of new centres of privilege. Indeed the Non-Aligned Movement's position on the Council's decision-making process has been consistently directed at questioning the continued relevance of the veto, its possible abolition or at least the imposition of restrictions on its use. Bangladesh believes that the continued privileged status of permanent members is a matter of concern and that the objective should be to focus on limiting or removing this preserve over time. We believe, however, that if a clear consensus was to emerge in support of the expansion of the ranks of permanent members, taking into account the effectiveness and credibility of the Council in the face of new and emerging political and economic realities, we would need to take a much harder and more stringent look at the criteria and modalities for the selection of new incumbents. Objective criteria would need to be worked out above and beyond the criteria laid down under Article 23, paragraph 1, of the Charter and must, *inter alia*, include a country's capacity to serve and to contribute towards maintaining peace and security; its commitment to democratic ideals; its record in the area of human rights; and, above all, its compliance with internationally accepted covenants and the resolutions of the United

Nations. A major factor is that any such recognition as a permanent member must be achieved in conformity with the Charter and through consensus and the agreement of all Member States.

On the issue of the size of the Council, Bangladesh fully supports an expansion consistent with the increase in overall membership of the United Nations and conforming to the broadly established mathematical ratio of 10 per cent of the total United Nations membership. We believe that the base criterion of the Council's composition should be equitable geographical distribution, taking into account current membership patterns in terms of regional distribution encompassing Europe as a whole, Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as the skewed impact on regional distribution of the five permanent members.

On broader issues, there is a wide convergence of views on improving the working methods and procedures of the Council, including institutional competence, transparency, accountability, efficiency, responsiveness and timely and well-informed decision-making consistent with the support of all Member States. Some important positive steps have already been taken, and further proposals can supplement this process.

Agenda item 120

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/49/503)

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Fifth Committee that is before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401 the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, that is, either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I also remind delegations that, again in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendation contained in the report of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/49/503). The draft decision was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: We have concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 120.

The meeting rose at 12:55 p.m.

United Nations A/49/PV.32

General Assembly
Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

32nd Meeting
Friday, 14 October 1994, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Programme of work

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I should like to consult delegations on the proposed format regarding the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, to be held on Thursday, 20 October 1994, in the morning.

After the opening of the meeting the Assembly would hear a statement by the Secretary-General. Next, the Assembly would hear statements by the Chairmen of the five regional groups and by the representative of the host country, as decided by the Assembly at its 3rd meeting, on 23 September 1994, regarding observances and commemorative meetings. The Assembly would also hear statements by the Chairmen of the Group of 77 and of the European Union, the President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the Chairman of the Group of Nordic Countries and the Chairman of the Second Committee.

I understand that interested delegations will submit a draft resolution in advance of the meeting for consideration on that date.

May I take it that the Assembly approves of this format?

It was so decided.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I should like to request delegations to cooperate by making an effort to keep their statements under the 15-minute limit, as decided by the Assembly.

Statement by the President

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I should like to seek the cooperation of delegations on the matter of punctuality. I remind delegations that punctuality is of the utmost importance in ensuring the effective and orderly organization of the work of the Assembly and in achieving economies for the United Nations.

I strongly endorse the practical suggestions made at previous sessions that each delegation designate someone to be present at the scheduled time. I genuinely hope that all delegations will cooperate.

Agenda item 33 *(continued)*

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

The President *(interpretation from French)*: Before calling on the first speaker I should like to inform the Assembly that the representative of Nigeria has expressed a desire to participate in the debate on this item.

94-86660 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum. When the result of a recorded and/or roll-call vote is followed by an asterisk, see annex to the record.

Inasmuch as the list of speakers was closed on Thursday, 13 October, at noon, may I ask the Assembly whether there is any objection to the inclusion of this delegation in the list of speakers?

I see none. Nigeria is therefore included in the list.

Mr. Dimitrov (Bulgaria): The Bulgarian delegation joins all the others that have expressed appreciation of the untiring efforts of Ambassador Samuel Insanally, who so skilfully chaired the deliberations of the Open-ended Working Group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 48/26. I should like also to thank the Vice-Chairmen of the Group, Ambassador Breitenstein and Ambassador Chew, for their remarkable work.

Bulgaria shares the opinion that the ongoing discussion on reform of the Security Council in the framework of the Open-ended Group is highly constructive and substantive. We are ready to make an active contribution to this important exercise, which is focused on the very future of the Organization. It is our strong belief that the new spirit of cooperation prevailing in the international community will make it possible to reach consensus solutions, enabling the Security Council to meet the challenges of the new times in the most effective and efficient way.

An enlargement of the Security Council should aim to enhance its capacity in the sphere of the maintenance of international peace and security. We support the search for an appropriate balance between the need to increase the size of the Council, owing to the growth in the number of States Members of the United Nations over the years, and the need for effectiveness and efficiency in its work.

We are of the opinion that this balance could be achieved if the Council were enlarged to a number in the low twenties. In this process, it will be necessary to ensure that the increase in the number of non-permanent members preserves the ratio, on the one hand, between permanent and non-permanent members and, on the other hand, between the regional groups.

In practical terms, this would mean ensuring that States that carry considerable weight in international political and economic life - for example, Germany and Japan - as well as other countries that are influential in regional or global terms, could assume the responsibility of permanent status in the Council. An additional non-permanent seat should be allocated to the Eastern European Group. In this connection, it is appropriate to remind representatives that this regional group has exactly doubled its membership since the latest enlargement of the Council in 1965, while the membership of the United Nations over the same period has increased from 113 to 184.

We welcome the Council's recent steps to improve its working methods - steps intended to increase transparency and to secure stronger involvement by non-member States. This momentum should be maintained through mechanisms designed to take into account, at an early stage of the decision-making process, the positions of neighbouring countries and of other interested States. The question of possible contributions by regional organizations, under appropriate arrangements, should also be taken into account.

The need for such consultations is felt most strongly when economic sanctions and similar preventive and enforcement measures are being considered. This process should also include an advance detailed evaluation of any negative effects on the economies of neighbouring countries and should define the ways and means of dealing with them.

Additionally, it has become clear that there is a pressing need for an increase in the transparency of the functioning of the Security Council sanctions committees, since their work is of special importance for a number of States that have already assumed heavier burdens in implementing decisions of the Council. It would only be fair to devise mechanisms to assist these countries in their difficult situations, starting the imperative need for a greater exchange of information, regular and/or ad hoc effective briefings on the deliberations of committee meetings, and holding open meetings or allowing the States concerned to participate as observers whenever such participation is warranted by the discussion of issues of vital importance for their economies.

Other measures to improve the transparency of the work of the Council might include briefings by the Council President or his or her representative on the most important elements of the discussions during informal consultations.

Regular consultations with troop contributors and other States concerned should be institutionalized as a component of the decision-making process on peace-keeping operations, especially when the Council is considering changes in their mandates and composition.

In conclusion, allow me to reaffirm my country's readiness to continue to contribute actively to the important process of adapting the Organization to the new challenges confronting it, of which the reform of the Security Council is a major element.

Mr. Erdenechuluun (Mongolia): My delegation fully associates itself with the statement delivered earlier on this agenda item by the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and endorses the points raised therein. The purpose of my statement is to highlight the issues of particular interest to my delegation and to point to the ideas we consider important to bear in mind in our future work.

We believe that the Open-ended Working Group did a commendable job over the last year, considering the sensitive and delicate nature of the issues discussed. My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to Ambassador Insanally, Chairman of the Working Group, and to Ambassadors Wilhelm Breitenstein of Finland and Chew Tai Soo of Singapore, the two Vice-Chairmen, for their skill and discretion in guiding our work.

A great number of issues were covered and even more ideas exchanged during the meetings of the Open-ended Working Group. With the invaluable support of the Secretariat, the Chairman produced several papers outlining the positions of States, points on which there was convergence of views and others on which there was disagreement. By and large, the Working Group succeeded, in our view, in accumulating a wealth of ideas on how to approach and execute this centrally important task of ensuring equitable representation on and an increase in the membership of the Security Council.

None the less, the report (A/48/47) of the Open-ended Working Group to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly reflects neither the lively discussion that took place in the Group's meetings nor the wealth of proposals and ideas submitted by the delegations. Reporting to the General Assembly on points of both agreement and disagreement within the Working Group would have been helpful, in our view, in generating more constructive and detailed discussion at this session of the General Assembly, as well as in identifying priorities for the Working Group to address next year.

In our view, the most important achievement of the Working Group lies in its recording "a convergence of views that the membership of the Security Council should be enlarged" and that "there was also agreement that the scope and nature of such enlargement require further discussion" (A/48/47, para. 8).

Another valuable point of agreement which, to our regret, was not reflected in the report, was the adoption by the Working Group of a package-deal approach providing for the inclusive and thorough consideration of mutually interrelated issues of increase in the membership and changes in the working methods and procedures of the Security Council. A mere enlargement of the Council by a few seats without adequate improvements in its working methods and procedures will not suffice.

We understand full well that an expanded Council should, by necessity, reflect the emergence of new important actors on the international scene, such as Japan and Germany. By the same token, it should be emphasized that adequate representation of the non-aligned and other developing countries in the permanent-member category must be secured.

Mongolia continues to advocate a moderate increase in both the permanent and non-permanent membership of the Security Council. We feel that a 25-26 strong membership could make the Council a body well representative of the world community and yet small enough to act quickly and efficiently.

In our understanding, the need to ensure equitable geographical representation in the Security Council is an important driving force for this whole exercise. Here, similarly, we observe with satisfaction a growing acknowledgement that Africa, Asia and Latin America should be given larger representation in the restructured Council, including in the permanent-member category. More importantly, however, we must secure a proper and fair distribution of seats within the regional groups so that every State, regardless of its size and resources, would have a fair chance to serve its term in the Council and contribute to the common cause. The idea of introducing a mechanism of constituencies in the Security Council merits further consideration, as it would facilitate proper representation of small- and medium-size States in the Council and, above all, help provide greater transparency, accountability and representativeness in its work.

The question of decision-making in the Security Council is another issue of paramount importance. We share the position of many delegations that in the long run the veto prerogative should be abolished altogether as an undemocratic institution running contrary to the

underlying principle of sovereign equality of Member States. In this context, the option of not granting the right to veto to the new permanent members in the restructured Security Council would, in our opinion, be a logical first step towards the abolishment of this institution. We also noted with interest a number of ideas aimed at limiting the application of veto rights in the future Security Council and expect the Working Group to deliberate on them with due care and attention. Here I wish to reiterate our firm belief that the rule of obligatory abstention in the Security Council, contained in Article 27 (3) of the Charter, should be revived in unequivocal terms, and ways should be found to ensure that this rule is adhered to in the restructured Council.

My delegation supports the Working Group's recommendation that it continue its work during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. We hope that on the basis of its work in 1994 the Working Group will be able to engage in an in-depth discussion of the various proposals and ideas before it with a view to reaching a balanced consensus sooner rather than later.

Mr. Cardenas (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish):* Almost one year has elapsed since the General Assembly decided to create, through resolution 48/26, an Open-ended Working Group to consider all aspects of the question of the possible increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

This Working Group held active and effective meetings this year, and in this context I should like to highlight the excellent job done by the President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, Mr. Insanally, as well as the Vice-Chairmen of the Group, Mr. Chew Tai Soo of Singapore and Wilhelm Breitenstein of Finland.

My delegation had an opportunity to take an active part in the various deliberations of this Working Group, as well as in the various informal consultations conducted by its Chairman.

The position of the Argentine Government, as already expressed in its response to the request of the Secretary-General (A/48/264), was recently reiterated in the statement made by President Carlos Menem on Tuesday, 27 September 1994, in the Assembly. It can be summarized as follows.

First, the Republic of Argentina attaches special importance to the process of reform of the Security Council which has been started. The primary objective of this process should be the strengthening of the Security Council by achieving greater effectiveness and transparency in its functioning and making it more representative of the States Members of the United Nations.

Secondly, any expansion of the membership of the Security Council should be undertaken with care and prudence, and should at all times respect the principle of the sovereign equality of States.

Thirdly, the possible increase in the number of members of the Security Council must be effected on the basis of the criteria contained in Article 23 of the United Nations Charter, criteria which we deem to be sound.

Fourthly, the Argentine Republic advocates a limited increase in non-permanent seats - I repeat, non-permanent seats - and the elimination of the clause which now bars immediate re-election.

This, as we see it, would enable those States that are in a position - and desire - to make a contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security to have seats in the Security Council more frequently. It would also avoid causing regional imbalances that might unjustifiably alter the historical system whereby some States traditionally alternate their membership of the Council, as could be precisely the case of the Argentine Republic.

Fifthly, greater transparency and representativeness of the Security Council could be achieved by better participation of the members on issues that are of specific interest to them. This could be done in two ways; first, by means of greater procedural transparency in the work of the Council, especially in informal consultations, and, secondly by establishing mechanisms that would allow for a relationship between the Members of the United Nations and the Security Council.

In this connection, the Argentine Republic, which is at present a non-permanent member of the Security Council, has already submitted an initiative, together with New Zealand, designed to establish a procedure to ensure regular and predictable dialogue between the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries when the mandates of peace-keeping operations are being reviewed or renewed. I take this opportunity to thank Member States for the valuable support we have been receiving regarding this initiative. It encourages us to pursue it.

Many aspects of this subject that have been discussed in our Working Group do not require amending the Charter of the United Nations. Many of those aspects, which could be considered as procedural but which have to do with the transparency and representativeness of the Security Council, are within the Council's own competence.

In this context, I should like to highlight the work done by the Security Council Working Group on Procedures and Documentation. In the last two years many changes have been introduced which have benefited the membership at large. However, we believe that there is still much progress to be made.

In this connection my delegation, as a member of the Security Council for the 1994-1995 term, is taking an active part in its work and has for several months, together with other delegations, advocated the consideration of the procedural issues that have been identified by the Assembly's Open-ended Working Group.

This first stage of the Working Group's activity should enable us to draw certain conclusions that would permit this process to continue effectively and usefully. To that end, let me refer to two points: first, the purpose of our future discussion and, secondly, the way to achieve that purpose.

Regarding the purpose of our discussion, we feel that we ought to focus on those points where there is clear-cut consensus - I repeat, clear-cut consensus - on the part of the membership. In this connection, we feel it would be very helpful to use the informal working paper submitted by the Chairman of the Working Group on 20 May last. It properly identifies the points of agreement.

With respect to the course of action to be followed, my delegation supports extending the mandate of the Working Group, preferably under your chairmanship, Mr. President, and with the same Vice-Chairmen.

As far as the modalities are concerned, we believe that, to ensure transparency and effectiveness, a proper balance must be struck between plenary meetings, and consultations in smaller groups.

I should like through you, Mr. President, to assure the Assembly that it can count on my delegation's full cooperation during the new session of the Working Group.

Mr. Khani (Syrian Arab Republic) *(interpretation from Arabic):* The General Assembly has been considering the item entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council" since its thirty-fourth session. Although consideration of the item receded somewhat, it was resumed at the forty-eighth session. Many speakers have attached particular importance to our debate on the item. Such attention to the item is warranted in view of the importance of the subject, and of the tasks mandated to the Security Council by the Charter with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security.

With the approaching fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, significant questions are bound to be asked about the achievements of this Organization and the obstacles it still faces. One of the most important of those is the question of increasing the membership of the Security Council and the need to arrive at a formula for equitable representation therein. Such questions arise from the fact that the present composition of the Council, which took shape in the wake of the Second World War, has become rather anachronistic at a time when the Organization's membership is fourfold what it was at the time of its inception.

Many regional groups and Member States have worked diligently on this matter and have focused on the Council's decision-making procedures which must be studied as an integral part of an overall plan.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of my country, in his statement before the General Assembly, on 3 October 1994, had this to say on the matter:

> "It seems that none of the Member States objects in principle to the idea of introducing reforms to the United Nations, including the enlargement of the Security Council's membership. However, the question that could take years before any agreement is reached on it is that which relates to the nature of the required reforms, the criteria for choosing the new members of the Security Council and, first and foremost, the right of veto: whether to expand it or abolish it altogether from the Charter". *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 14th meeting, [p. 17])*

Increasing the membership of the Security Council would help strengthen democracy within the United Nations and enable the Security Council to fully discharge its main responsibilities, as this would lead to strict respect for the two principles of the sovereign co-

equality of States and of equitable geographical representation on the Council.

Any reform of the Security Council must reflect the concerns of all the States Members of the United Nations whose number now stands at 184 and two-thirds of which States were not involved in the drafting of the Charter. The Security Council is the only United Nations body whose criteria for membership were set out in the Charter. Therefore, enabling the developing countries to make an effective contribution to restructuring the United Nations and to ensuring that they have their democratic share in the Security Council would be an expression of democracy in our Organization, especially that the developing nations constitute 80 per cent of the world's population.

The countries of the Mon-aligned Movement have always emphasized the need for democratizing international relations and have worked diligently for the achievement of the Movement's goals of equitable representation and increased Security Council membership.

My delegation believes that the Security Council should be reformed and restructured in response to the major changes that have taken place on the international arena and that such reform and restructuring should include a comprehensive review of the Council's methods of work and decision-making procedures.

In conclusion, we must point out that reform is not an end in itself but a necessary means of facing up to the changes that have been enfolding in the world since the end of the cold war. To face up to the challenges inherent in such changes, there is a need for the cooperation of the entire inte- ational community if we are to look forward to a better future and ensure respect for the principles of sovereignty, democracy and transparency in decision-making.

Mr. Tejera Paris (Venezuela) *(interpretation from Spanish):* Venezuela has on four occasions had the privilege of being a member of the Security Council. That experience certainly served to reaffirm our belief that any change that might take place in the membership of the Council should aim at increased regional participation and also at improving the effectiveness of the Council.

All Member States, including many of those who joined the Organization in recent years, can appreciate - through their own experience or that of their respective regions - the complex and extremely difficult nature of the work of the Council and, in particular, the complexity of the most recent conflicts and crises that the Security Council has had to deal with. The Council has made every effort to devote the required attention to these conflicts and has tried new, delicate and complicated solutions to some of them, sometimes stretching its powers to the limit.

Almost three years after the summit meeting of the Security Council, which began this new stage in the life of our Organization, the opportunity now presents itself to strike a balance, this time around with the benefit of the views of all the Member States. The General Assembly, in agreeing to consider equitable representation in the Security Council and an increase in its membership, has expressed a desire for change.

Venezuela would like to thank Ambassador Rudolph Insanally of Guyana for the manner in which he presided over the Working Group which last year considered the "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council". Its meetings were most useful in assessing existing prospects and in beginning to identify points of agreement. We are pleased to see acknowledged the need to ensure that representation in the Council must be in line with that of an Organization whose membership has grown so significantly. This expansion, which is unreservedly supported by Venezuela, must now be defined in terms of format and scope.

Venezuela believes that any expansion of the Council should be guided by the principles of the sovereign equality of States and of equitable geographical representation, and, to this end, Venezuela supports the expansion of the number of non-permanent seats.

The Government of Venezuela believes that any increase in the number of permanent seats must take into account the Latin American and Caribbean region, whose contributions to international peace and security are praiseworthy from whatever standpoint they are considered. The President of Venezuela referred explicitly to this issue in his statement before this Assembly on 30 September last.

At the same time, Venezuela would like to reiterate that the equality of the rights and responsibilities of States requires a revision of the power of veto. We have supported that principle since we became founding Members of the Organization in 1945. Present circumstances make it clear, however, that the extraordinary veto power is no longer in keeping with its

original goals. The most recent practice of the Security Council, and in particular of its permanent members, seems to confirm this as well.

We believe that the conditions are ripe for reform in the political and institutional arena. The Security Council, on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization, can and must adapt to the new international reality.

We trust that the Working Group will, in due course, resume its work and that it will begin identifying the specific characteristics that the Security Council must possess if it is to deal with future challenges. We offer our full cooperation to this end.

The President *(interpretation from French):* Before we continue our consideration of this item, I should like once again ask for the cooperation of States in being punctual. I must confess that during the general debate there were some delays in beginning our meetings. That was inevitable because of the large number of Heads of State and other officials visiting the Secretary-General and me. But the general debate is now over, and we should try to make an extra effort to be on time. At any rate, it is my firm intention to begin our meetings at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., respectively - not a minute later.

Mr. Hayes (Ireland): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to personally renew the warm words of congratulation and welcome to you, as President of the General Assembly, that were expressed by my Minister in the general debate a few weeks ago. I should also like to express our thanks to your predecessor, Ambassador Insanally, for the excellent job he did as President of the last session.

The same Minister to whom I have just referred - the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Ireland - adverted to Security Council reform in his statements in the general debate at both the forty-eighth and forty-ninth sessions of the General Assembly. Last month he mentioned it as one of seven points on which he believed there should be priority action in our efforts to build a United Nations capable of meeting the challenges of the new era. Both then and last year he stressed that the Security Council should be more representative of the increased general membership, reflective of the changes in economic and political relations and more responsive to the needs of the general membership.

These are the broad ambits of our policy aimed at ensuring that there is a sense of common purpose between the Council and the overall United Nations membership, on whose behalf the Council acts and which is also bound by the Council's decisions; I am referring, of course, to Article 24 and Article 25 of the Charter. That aim has been and will continue to be the guideline for our participation in the debate on this topic and in the deliberations in the Open-ended Working Group. The yardstick by which we assess any proposals made is whether we feel they contribute to the achievement of that aim.

We do not intend in this plenary debate to engage in an examination of proposals. We do not believe that any delegation or group of delegations has, or would even claim to have, the ideal solution to this question. Accordingly, we feel we should leave substantial discussions to the Working Group, where detail may be more appropriately addressed.

My delegation, of course, fully supports the decision adopted by consensus at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly which noted the report of the Open-ended Working Group and approved the recommendation that the Group should continue its work during this session of the General Assembly. We intend to continue to contribute to that work to the best of our ability and in a fully cooperative manner. We hope that the Working Group will resume its activities shortly. We favour establishment of a schedule of meetings at regular intervals, with the flexibility to adapt their frequency to developments in the negotiations. If progress is being made, it may be useful to make use occasionally of smaller groupings to come up with suggestions on limited issues, while at the same time maintaining transparency and preserving scrupulously the authority of the Working Group.

In speaking thus of procedural matters, we are assuming that the work will now move beyond the deliberative stage to a serious negotiating stage. If it does not so move, any procedural decisions will be worthless. Negotiation necessarily means addressing proposals in increasing detail. In this respect, it is helpful that some relatively detailed ideas have been placed before us by Italy and Australia. The non-paper prepared by the Working Group Chairman during the last session is also of assistance in moving towards more focused exchanges. We hope that the resumption of the work will feature, *inter alia*, responses to these documents and counter-proposals and that thus we will get down to serious negotiations.

However, none of this will happen unless and until Governments go beyond explanation of their own preoccupations to consideration of the preoccupations of others and begin the search for accommodation between them. We believe that this subject is too important for the general well-being of the United Nations to defer that development any further.

Finally, I would like to express our appreciation of the skill and industry of the members of the Bureau of the Working Group: Ambassador Insanally, Chairman, and Ambassadors Breitenstein and Chew, Vice-Chairmen. Their efforts have been the major contributing factor in the progress achieved so far, which we should not underestimate merely because of how far we still have to go. We are also confident that the Working Group will be steered successfully into and through the next stage of our negotiations.

Mr. Sitaula (Nepal): I have the great honour and privilege to speak on the agenda item before us, which is of paramount importance to all delegations and to the United Nations as a whole. My delegation expresses its sincere appreciation to Ambassador Samuel R. Insanally of Guyana, President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, for his personal initiative on the matter during his able stewardship as Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group.

With the end of the cold war, the Security Council has become the important organ of decision-making and action on various international issues. The fundamental changes in international relations, together with the rearrangement of power relations in the post-cold-war world, have made it necessary to consider the role and composition of the Council. The new imbalance between the North and the South on various political and socio-economic issues is another of the reasons behind the argument for re-examining the composition and functioning of the Council.

My delegation has actively participated in the discussion on this matter in the Working Group and has expressed its position on several occasions. We view this exercise as an endeavour to strengthen the effectiveness of the Security Council on the basis of equitable representation so that its decisions may have broad-based support and legitimacy. The Security Council's decisions are binding on all Member States since the Council has a special responsibility by which it acts on behalf of the entire membership of the United Nations. It is of fundamental importance, therefore, to explore every possibility to ensure that decisions of the Council represent the views of the general membership.

As a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, Nepal endorses the views expressed at the Eleventh Ministerial Conference of the non-aligned countries held in Cairo in June this year and the Movement's Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation, held on 5 October 1994, on this matter. These meetings drew attention in particular to the fact that the non-aligned and developing countries are underrepresented and that the composition of the Council does not reflect the universal character of the United Nations. This imbalance especially puts into question the legitimacy, equity and credibility of the Organization. At the same time, my delegation fully shares the view that due consideration should be given to the principle of equitable geographical representation in the restructuring and revitalization of the Council.

An overwhelming majority of the Members of this Organization are small States. A situation in which reasonable opportunity is not afforded to smaller States to contribute to the work of the Security Council, in keeping with the criteria laid down in Article 23 of the Charter, would be contrary to the principle of equitable representation. In this context, we feel that the current exercise should not be limited to the enlargement of the membership, but that it should also consider a more comprehensive package of reforms in the working methods and procedures of the Council.

We attach high value to greater transparency and openness in the Council's work so that a large number of Members of the United Nations can contribute to the decision-making process. We believe that the increase in the membership of the Security Council should reflect the reality of the present-day world and international politics. We are happy to note that, during the deliberations in the Working Group, there was a broad convergence of views on greater transparency and on strengthening the relationship between the Council and the general membership.

Nepal, as a significant troop-contributor to United Nations peace-keeping operations, feels that there is a need for a consultative mechanism of the Security Council with troop- contributing countries, especially when decisions are taken regarding the mandates of new peace-keeping operations and the revision or renewal of mission mandates.

Finally, on the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, the issuance by the Security Council of a substantive annual report and special reports for the consideration of the General Assembly, as and when necessary, would provide an invaluable opportunity for the general membership to consider the work of the Council. This practice would also help strengthen the relationship between the Council and the Assembly.

Mr. Lamptey (Ghana): This being my first time at the rostrum, let me first congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly and on the able manner in which you have conducted its affairs so far. It is the hope of my delegation that your guidance will speed the process of reform of the United Nations and particularly of the Security Council.

Recent developments and trends in global politics have given the United Nations a central role in the unfolding international order. More important, the outbreak of conflicts in virtually all regions of the world, with the need for peace to be established and kept, has placed the Security Council in a critical position in world affairs. It is evident that the international political situation on which the Security Council was built is entirely different today.

If the Security Council is to perform efficiently and effectively the role assigned it under the Charter, the international community must seize the opportunity offered by the propitious post-cold-war atmosphere and the ongoing reforms within the United Nations to bring the Security Council into sharper focus, fine-tuning it as a preeminent focal point of United Nations action in the arena of global peace. The composition and distribution of seats and the resultant powers enjoyed by members of the Security Council today are predicated upon certain factors which at the relevant point in history were defensible and justifiable. Although these arrangements were well-founded and have served us relatively well, it is the view of my delegation that the time has come when we should boldly rethink and rearrange things in such a way as to bring the Security Council into line with current changed circumstances.

Mr. Sucharipa (Austria), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In 1945, the membership of the United Nations was 51. Then in 1963, the membership having expanded to 162, the need was felt for an increase in the number of non-permanent members of the Security Council from 6 to 10 to reflect an equitable geographical representation. Now more than ever, with an expansion in membership to 184, it has become imperative that existing arrangements be reviewed.

Furthermore, the Ghana delegation believes that permanent membership in the Security Council of the five major wartime allies, although well-founded then, has become obsolete. And if it is thought necessary to retain permanent membership of the Council, then new arrangements must be reached which will create a general sense of equality and global balance in an organ as vital as the Security Council.

The question that immediately comes to mind is whether or not the veto power in the possession of the five permanent members is still necessary in the present era. This is certainly a matter that needs to be discussed thoroughly if the reform is to promote equity. Ghana subscribes fully to the position collectively articulated by the African Group on this question. At the same time, we are aware of the varied positions assumed by other groups and countries. We shall join in the creative effort to find meaningful compromises to ensure a better system.

What is important to emphasize here is that, despite our call for the increase in the number of Security Council members to 25, the issue is not a quantitative one - it is a qualitative one. It has to do with the exercise of power. It is the perception of most, including Ghana, that the power inherent in the right of veto should no longer be exercised by a privileged few and that its exercise should be democratized in such a way as to reflect balance, equity and the reality of the present international order as symbolized in the membership of this Organization. There could be many ways to achieve this objective and we should all be creative in this regard.

We need a new Security Council that will reflect the will of every nation on earth. We need a Security Council whose work is transparently reflective of all our common aspirations. We need a Security Council shorn of every vestige of big-Power politics, self-righteousness and the arrogance of size or wealth. Above all, we need a Security Council that will not usurp the function of bona fide international legal institutions and their regimes of the rule of law, a Council that cannot assume the role of a global supreme court without the benefit of a balanced mechanism through which accused nations can defend themselves, a Council without the attributes of prosecutors, judges and executioners of judgments at times flawed by bias, prejudice and preconceptions. It is

time to construct a new Security Council if we are to move away from the failures of the past and remove the blatant weaknesses of the present.

In this regard, my delegation hopes that the broad consensus that has been achieved so far by the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council will guide the Group to fashion a formula that will make the Council credible. We hope this can be achieved well before the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

If our perception of the new relevance of the United Nations in a rapidly changing global situation remains anchored in the cardinal principles of justice, equity and fairness, the new Security Council that will emerge from these momentous reform efforts will become the true sentinel at the door of total human freedom, development and peace, guarding us all against the tyranny of arms and wealth and the subversive agency of unacceptable rogue conduct on the part of any nation, big or small, rich or poor.

Mr. Fedotov (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian):* I wish to join other speakers in conveying high praise to the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council, Ambassador Samuel Insanally, President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, and to the Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Breitenstein of Finland and Ambassador Chew of Singapore.

The Russian Federation believes that our consideration of this item should be seen in the general context of adapting the United Nations to the political, economic, social and other realities of today's world. As the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Boris N. Yeltsin, stressed in his address to the Assembly at this session,

> "it will be impossible to avoid changes in the Security Council, which should remain sufficiently compact and an effective functioning body. This is especially important because, according to the Charter, the Security Council bears primary responsibility for supporting and maintaining international peace and security." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 5th meeting, pp. 4-5)*

For the first time in many decades, the Security Council has in recent years been active and energetic in carrying out that difficult mission. To its credit are a number of successful peace-keeping operations and very important decisions aimed at the prevention and settlement of conflicts and at strengthening security and stability in various parts of the world. A most cooperative relationship has developed among the members of the Security Council, which would have been unthinkable during the cold war, when the Security Council was frequently used not to search seriously search for solutions to pressing problems but to air ideological attitudes.

That is why it is important to us that consideration of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council be carried out in a pragmatic, constructive manner and not turned into a cause of political friction. The large number of conflicts in the world and the active involvement of the United Nations in settling them means that our approach to this matter must be thoughtful and cautious. We cannot permit the paralysis of a machinery that has been working in a well-adjusted and on the whole successful way.

In the opinion of the Russian Federation, an absolute, mandatory condition for resolving the question of increasing the Council's membership is that the effectiveness of the Security Council be maintained and strengthened, especially in the present situation, when the world has barely recovered from the threat of global nuclear confrontation and is facing new challenges to international peace and security.

For that reason, Russia supports the proposal for a limited expansion of the membership of the Security Council, up to a limit of 20 seats. This would make it possible to maintain the Council's ability to react effectively and promptly to sudden changes in international affairs.

In doing this, it is very important to observe the criteria laid down in the Charter for membership of the Security Council, to the effect that due regard should be specially paid, in the first instance to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and also to equitable geographical distribution. In our view, the present status of the permanent members of the Security Council should be maintained.

We realize the need for the Security Council, in taking decisions, to rely broadly on the views of all Members of the United Nations, and consider that, to that end, all the potential inherent in the Charter should be put to better use. Last year, the Security Council itself took a number of practical steps along these lines. Decisions were taken within existing procedures enabling other Members of the United Nations to receive fuller, prompter information about the Council's activities and to convey their views to members of the Council. We believe that those useful efforts should be continued.

Further improvement of the functioning of the Security Council should, in our view, be approached very carefully and without undue haste. It is essential that consensus measures be devised to preserve the Council's role as the central United Nations body bearing primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Russian delegation has been actively involved in the work of the Open-ended Working Group considering all aspects of the increase in the membership of the Security Council. In our view, the report of that Working Group, which was adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, presents a full and objective picture of the current state of the Group's consideration of the item. We are prepared to continue our active participation in the work of the Group, and are open to constructive cooperation with all Members of the United Nations on this important matter.

Mr. Butler (Australia): The report of the Open-ended Working Group describes important first steps towards strengthening the Security Council. There has been progress in areas under the second cluster of issues - those dealing with improvements in the working methods of the Council. But much more is needed.

The President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, Ambassador Insanally, and the two Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group, Ambassadors Chew Tai Soo of Singapore and Willy Breitenstein of Finland, did outstanding work in guiding the Open-ended Working Group. But the report of the Working Group reflects hesitancy by the membership in reflecting the substance of the debate in that Group and the key areas on which convergence of views emerged. For this and for other reasons we are convinced that the discussion now needs to focus on concrete proposals if it is to serve the agreed objective of bringing about change. It will be through discussion and negotiation of concrete proposals that an emerging understanding of what is effective, realistic and equitable will emerge.

In his statement to the Assembly on 3 October, the Australian Foreign Minister, Senator Gareth Evans, put some illustrative proposals on the table. Those proposals rest on the following basic premises:

First, there is agreement that the Council must be expanded. This agreement is recorded in the report of the Open-ended Working Group.

Secondly, an expanded Security Council must be representative in order to maintain its perceived legitimacy and thus its future viability. For example, present geographical representation on the Council is unbalanced. The membership must be expanded to ensure that the Council better represents the universal membership than it does today.

Thirdly, it will be important that all apply rigorously the criteria and qualifications for Security Council membership elaborated in Article 23 of the Charter. In our view, seeking to elaborate criteria additional to those contained in Article 23 is likely to be an unproductive distraction from the main business of the Working Group and we would discourage travel down that path.

Fourthly, an expanded Council must be effective and capable of responding quickly to the range of difficult situations with which the international community is being and can expect to be confronted - particularly deadly conflicts and massive human rights violations occurring within States. Thus, the new Council must be representative of the broad range of interests, perspectives and capabilities of Member States.

Fifthly, that expansion must be kept within strict numerical limits because, as is very widely recognized, there is a size beyond which the Council will not be able to function effectively. There appeared to be an emerging consensus in the Working Group that the number of members should not exceed 25.

Sixthly, Australia would regard conferring the veto power on any new permanent member of the Council as inconsistent with its diminishing use in a more cooperative atmosphere of collective security decision-making. For these same reasons, we believe it would be appropriate to slightly dilute the veto power of the existing five permanent members by requiring two from their number to concur in its exercise.

Senator Evans offered specific illustrative models in order to help focus the discussion of the General Assembly and the future work of the Working Group on the questions of composition and size and their relationship to equitable geographical representation. Our action expressed our belief that it is possible to move beyond the abstract into discussion and negotiations on concrete proposals and we encourage others to do the same.

The models we submitted for consideration are set out in an attachment to our written statement that has been circulated to Members of the Assembly.

The model that would most simply meet the legitimate aspirations of the largest States excluded at present from permanent membership of the Security Council - including Japan and Germany, whose claims we support - would involve the creation of five new permanent membership seats. Assuming the continuation of the existing regional groups, three new permanent members would come from Africa and Asia, one from the Group of Western European and Other States, and one from Latin America and the Caribbean.

If, as seems possible, agreement on a simple model of this kind proves to be not easily reachable, it may be worth giving consideration to a more complex alternative model. We have in mind one which would no doubt, in practice, guarantee effective permanency for the largest States excluded at present from the council, including Japan and Germany. But it would at the same time give a greater degree of flexibility to the Council's structure, and greater opportunities for recognition of several other countries that have made a major contribution to the Organization. We would envisage the removal of the prohibition on successive terms for non-permanent members. It might, for those reasons, be a model capable of commanding widespread support. This alternative model would involve, in addition to the five existing permanent members, whose veto power would again be slightly diluted, as already outlined, the creation of eight quasi-permanent seats, allocated among regional groups, for which consecutive election would be possible, together with 10 rotating non-permanent seats. It would make abundant sense, in our view, for the existing regional groups to be at the same time modified to reflect post-cold-war realities. A suggested way in which these 23 seats might be distributed among such a new set of regional groups is also set out in the table attached to the circulated text of this statement.

That table also sets out how they might be distributed among the existing groups. On this model, the question of which States became quasi-permanent members, and how long they remained on the Council in that capacity, would be a matter for determination by the regional group in question.

These models give due consideration to the benefits of retaining an appropriate balance in the proportion of permanent to quasi-permanent or non-permanent members. While the Council's effectiveness is well served by having a core of members with lengthy experience, these models also rest on the healthy rotation of membership of countries, large and small, which would bring the full range of perspectives on international affairs to the work of the Council.Any changes such as those described in these models would require amendments to Articles 23, 27 and 108 of the Charter. The opportunity should be taken at the same time to remove the anachronistic "enemy States" clauses in Articles 53 and 107. An accompanying General Assembly resolution could elaborate any new regional-group arrangements and any other understandings reached on a new Council.

We do not suggest that the models we have advanced are the only possible approaches. They are printed on paper, not etched in stone. These or any such models lend themselves to various possible permutations and combinations. It is only by thinking about such concrete possibilities that we will be able to distinguish between the plausible and the fanciful. We have heard from many speakers the expressed determination to move in a spirit of good will and conscientiousness to see that the United Nations for the next 50 years is soundly built. An expanded, newly legitimized Security Council is a crucial foundation to that building.

Turning now briefly to how the work of the Working Group can best progress, we believe the Working Group should accelerate its deliberations with the aim of agreeing on the basis for expansion by the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Our deliberations will benefit from the convening of informal consultations to be held parallel with the Working Group in order to develop formulas for the expansion of the Council and to assist in developing a convergence of approach on such formulas. These processes should commence as soon as possible.

The United Nations time has come. It can become the Organization envisaged in its Charter. Agreement on a new Security Council would be a very important signal that the United Nations is fulfilling its promise. It is a

signal that would be recognized by Member States and by people around the world.

Mr. Pak Gil Yon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Mankind wishes to live in peace in the world, free from any domination or subjugation. However, domination and subjugation on the globe still remain unchecked, and that is largely related to the existing inequitable international order and relationships.

I note with satisfaction that efforts are being made to restructure the Security Council as part of measures aimed at correcting such inequality in international relationships. My delegation appreciates the progress made by the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council formed pursuant to General Assembly resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993.

The restructuring of the Security Council is an important undertaking in light of the demands of the developing countries, which make up a majority of the United Nations membership, and the principle of justness and democracy.

In this regard my delegation believes that the proposals of the developing countries and the position mentioned in the Final Document of the Foreign Ministers' meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Cairo last June, are of great significance and due consideration should be given to them.

Let me make a few points with regard to the reform of the Security Council. Almost half a century has elapsed since the creation of the United Nations. During this period the United Nations membership has increased to 184 and noticeable changes in international relations have taken place. However, the developing countries are still not equally represented in the Security Council and are excluded from decision-making. Therefore democracy is not fully guaranteed in the Security Council. Even worse, big countries often have a monopoly on its use. We therefore support proposals to enlarge the membership of the Security Council that are aimed at allocating more seats to the developing countries.

Some countries are of the opinion that criteria for permanent membership of the Security Council must be based on considerations such as the level of development of countries and their capability of financially contributing to the United Nations. These views, I believe, are designed to enlarge the membership of the Security Council by only big and developed countries and to prevent developing countries from joining it. Restructuring the Security Council in this way will only contribute to an expansion of the existing imbalance.

Thus, a proportionate number of permanent-member seats in the Security Council should be given to developing countries so that their views and interests can be represented in the Security Council. In particular, due consideration should be given to the allocation of seats to countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America on the principle of equitable regional representation.

In addition, the number of non-permanent seats in the Security Council needs to be increased to give opportunities to other developing countries to participate in the work of the Security Council. That would strengthen the Security Council by making it responsive and relevant to prevailing realities, and credible and effective.

The General Assembly must play an important role in maintaining international peace and security. In this regard, steps should be taken to make the Security Council accountable to the General Assembly for the maintenance of international peace and security.

My delegation is of the view that the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly should be readjusted in such a manner that the decisions of the Security Council regarding military intervention and economic sanctions should be endorsed by a two-thirds majority or by consensus in the General Assembly.

As for the Japanese position regarding permanent membership of the Security Council and deletion of "enemy State" clauses in the United Nations Charter, my delegation wishes to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the following point.

As is well known, Japan is a defeated State of the Second World War and it brought much suffering and caused much damage to Asian people and the world's people as a whole. Japan is now pursuing a plan to become a military and nuclear Power while trying to cheat the world by paying only lip-service to apology and compensation for its past aggression and war crimes.

The people of Asia and of the world express serious concern over Japanese behaviour, and they are not in a position to support Japan in its attempt to get a permanent seat on the Security Council unless Japan is willing to

make a clean slate of the crimes it committed during the Second World War.

For these reasons, in my view, it is premature to talk about the possibility of permanent membership for Japan on the Security Council and the deletion of the "enemy State" clauses in the United Nations Charter.

In conclusion, I hope that the joint efforts and endeavours of many delegations will bring about realistic results in the discussion of this item at this meeting.

Mr. Sychou (Belarus) *(interpretation from Russian):* The delegation of Belarus regards our current discussion on the question of equitable representation in the Security Council and the increase in its membership as a substantive stage on the way to resolving specific aspects of the problem. We believe that arriving at a consensus on the basis of an achieved understanding on the need to expand the membership of the Security Council should be focused to a greater degree on elaborating practical agreements for carrying out reform of the membership and configuration as well as the functioning of the Council. The organizational framework of this work could be provided by the unofficial consultations and official meetings of the Open-ended Working Group under the guidance of the President of the last session of the Assembly and his two deputies, the distinguished representatives of Finland and Singapore.

Figuratively speaking, we should say that at this stage of the discussion we have to synchronize our watches in order to coordinate our efforts to find ways and means of improving the Security Council's activities under changed circumstances. We believe that success in the negotiations on reforming the Security Council and setting the timetable and the ways and means of carrying this out will largely depend on three factors: the political willingness of States Members of the Organization, abundant clarity in their positions and a willingness to strike a balance of interests on the part of all interested parties.

In this context I would like to recall the essence of what the position of Belarus has been, as revealed in the general political discussion. First, if the United Nations is to continue to work effectively, there must be far-reaching reform of its main bodies, including the Security Council. Secondly, the representation of countries and regions in the Security Council should take more fully into account the interests of all groups of countries, including the Eastern European Group. Thirdly, any reform of the Security Council should not detract from its role as the body that bears the main responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, which is something that we all need, particularly small States Members of the United Nations. Fourthly, the Government of the Republic of Belarus regards favourably the proposal to increase the number of permanent members of the Security Council by including States which are making an exceptional contribution to achieving the purposes of the Charter.

In this context, our delegation believes that countries that have declared their intention to assume additional responsibility in the future for maintaining international peace and serving other purposes enunciated in the United Nations Charter and which are requesting permanent membership or so-called extended representation in the Security Council, could even now assume a greater share of the financial burden of expenses for peace-keeping operations. This would help to achieve a more rapid consensus on the criteria for selecting new permanent members of the Security Council. However, any increase in the number of permanent seats should not reduce the possibility of the election and participation in the work of the Security Council of other States, from all regional groups, as non-permanent members. I would particularly like to single out certain other important aspects of the future work on the renewal and reform of the Security Council that may possibly be of interest to States that are not actually seeking permanent membership in the Security Council.

First, as long as, in the General Assembly, there are five regional groups, Belarus cannot accept the concept of reforming the Security Council on the basis of a bipolar view of the world along North-South lines or among the four regional continental groups. We favour looking for reforms of the Security Council that would be based essentially on the concept of a multipolar world, would take into account the increased membership of our Organization, and would provide an opportunity for the equitable and genuine participation of small countries in the activities of the Security Council as non-permanent members.

Secondly, we believe that the total representation of countries from all regions in the Security Council could and should be more democratic in nature. Achieving this is possible only if we are completely clear about the future membership of the five regional groups in the General Assembly. It is absolutely necessary that we take into account the most recent changes in various parts of the world, the possible intention on the part of certain countries to seek membership in other regional groups

and a more equitable distribution of regional quotas for the election of non-permanent members if we are to ensure the representation of countries from each region and a more equitable rotation among countries within regional groups.

Thirdly, any formula for altering the membership and configuration of the Security Council must not fail to take into account the legitimate national and general interests of States Members of each of the five regional groups. Naturally, this is equally true of the Group of Eastern European States, whose number, as you know, has considerably increased over recent years as a result of the formation of new independent States. In this connection, it is rather anomalous to consider a number of proposals that do not always reveal the prospect of an additional rotational seat for the Eastern European Group of States, which, as I said, has in fact accounted for a considerable increase in the total membership of our Organization. Therefore, success in the next stage of negotiating on the upper and lower levels of the additional seats for the members of the Security Council has to be connected to necessarily having at least one extra place for each of the regional groups among the non-permanent members and also intraregional agreements on how they shall be filled.

Fourthly, achieving consensus on many of the specific problems related to the reform of the Security Council is being held up by difficulties in resolving the procedures and the current practices of having a prior selection of candidates within certain existing regional groups of the General Assembly. Therefore, our delegation supports the idea of interregional agreements on the basis of rotation, putting forward candidacies for the rotational seats in the Security Council regardless of the existing or future constitution of its permanent membership and of their distribution among regions or continents.

The delegation of the Republic of Belarus is prepared to cooperate with any interested States to develop further these ideas, on the basis of the following premise: any increase in the permanent membership of the Security Council should not lead to a reduction in the ratio of the permanent and rotational seats in a more representative Security Council. The current and possibly future overrepresentation of the group of Western European and other States and the underrepresentation of three regional groups whose legitimate interests are collectively expressed and defended by the Non-Aligned Movement cannot serve as the grounds for doing a disservice to the interest of those countries that make up the Eastern European Group. The principle of equitable geographical distribution and other principles for selecting non-permanent members of the Security Council as set forth in Article 23, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the Charter of the United Nations, should be faithfully and fully applied in achieving both equitable intraregional agreements for filling the two-year and additional rotational seats and interregional agreements on new balanced quotas among the non-permanent seats for each of the five regional groups.

In conclusion, the delegation of the Republic of Belarus is convinced that reforming the Security Council must necessarily involve the democratization of its procedures. Any reforms of this body that are carried out should in no way reduce the level of effectiveness already reached in its work as the United Nations body that bears primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security on behalf of and in the interest of, all States Members of our Organization.

Mr. Muthaura (Kenya): The agenda item before us, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters," is an issue of great interest to the general membership of the Organization. Strong arguments were advanced at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly and deeper elaborations of those arguments have been amply discussed in the Assembly's Open-Ended Working Group, whose summary report has been submitted to us. It is not a question of whether there is justification for reforming the Council but of how best to do so in order to enhance its legitimacy, effectiveness and accountability.

In this regard I wish to associate my delegation with the views that were ably expressed by Tunisia on behalf of the Organization of African Unity and by Indonesia on behalf of the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. We, however, wish to highlight a few points.

As envisaged in the Charter the Security Council bears the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security on behalf of the United Nations. Such a responsibility bestows upon the Council's members, both individually and collectively, the heavy duty of the effective management of international conflicts and situations that threaten international peace and security, to be carried out on behalf of the entire membership of the Organization. Needless to say, this obligation should be impartially applicable, whether the threat is targeted against small States or big States. Smaller countries feel even more threatened by insecurity than do bigger ones, which have the ability to deter threats directed against them. It is

also important for the Assembly to appreciate that threats to international peace and security have important geographical dimensions that cannot be ignored as we deliberate Security Council reform.

Ironically, in its present form and working methods the Security Council tends to deal with conflicts occurring in certain countries and that have serious implications for neighbouring countries without the countries most concerned being given the opportunity to participate in the discussions within the Security Council that are aimed at solving or containing such conflicts. In this connection it is our view that interested countries, and particularly the countries that are neighbours of the country or region at the centre of conflict, should be given ample opportunity, in the Council's informal and formal discussions, to assist the Council to take appropriate measures. Almost invariably, neighbouring countries bear the heaviest burden of the repercussions of conflicts, either in terms of refugees and the overflow of insecurity or in terms of the enforcement measures taken by the Council, such as sanctions.

This brings me to the issue of equitable regional representation in the Security Council. I have already stressed the importance of the geographical dimension with regard to threats to international peace and security. Accordingly, it is in the interests of the Council that all regions be equitably represented by both the permanent and non-permanent membership of the Council. An effective regional representation will ensure that the Council is adequately sensitized with regard to the regional perceptions and complexities of the conflict in question. A better-informed Council would naturally make more objective and popular decisions on behalf of the general membership of the Organization. Not only should the Council's decision-making be objective, it should be seen to be objective, and in the interest of the general membership. That consideration is more evident at the present time, when the Council is being over-stretched by the growing number of conflicts in which the United Nations is involved throughout the world.

With regard to the size of the Council, we appreciate the rationale behind the present number of permanent seats. None the less, the notion of perpetual permanent seats on the Security Council does not appear to be consistent with the evolution of world power relationships. This is one of the reasons why a proposal has been made to expand the number of permanent seats to include a few other world Powers that have emerged since the Organization was founded. It would be of great significance if the notion of permanency were qualified in the reformed Security Council to make possible a review of the membership of permanent seats after a decade or two.

The non-represented regions of Africa and Latin America and the under-represented region of Asia should be accorded their due share of permanent seats.

The criteria for the selection of permanent members of the Security Council set forth in Article 23 of the Charter need to be interpreted more liberally to include the principle of regional representation. In this regard, seats allocated for regional representation should be filled by election by the General Assembly on the basis of regional nominations. This process would ensure the maintenance of the important principle that Security Council members act on behalf of the general membership.

The non-permanent seats on the Security Council, which currently stand at 10, are too few for the remaining 179 Member States of the United Nations. It is imperative, therefore, that the number be correspondingly increased, taking into account the Charter requirement for equitable geographical distribution.

Many delegations have expressed the view that a Security Council of 25 members would, at present, be a realistic option. We subscribe to that view, taking into account the arguments that have been presented on the need to ensure legitimacy, equitable regional representation and proportionate representation of the general membership. Among those 25 seats it is possible to negotiate the distribution of both permanent and non-permanent seats to correct the imbalance created by history, particularly with regard to the distribution of the permanent seats on the Security Council.

During the discussions of the Open-ended Working Group there was general agreement that transparency in the working methods of the Security Council and the involvement of countries contributing troops to peace-keeping activities, as well as other, closely associated countries, in the Council's informal consultations would enhance that body's effectiveness. We appreciate the measures recently taken by the Security Council towards that end and hope that much more will be done to redress the various weaknesses that have been highlighted during the deliberations of the Working Group and the debate in the General Assembly.

We need not elaborate on the need to democratize the decision-making process in the Council, including the need to do away with the power of the veto, the most undemocratic decision-making method inscribed - unfortunately - in the Charter.

We endorse the proposal by the Open-ended Working Group on the renewal of its mandate to enable it to complete its task. It is our hope that the Working Group will utilize the unique opportunity available on the eve of the Organization's fiftieth anniversary to facilitate consensus on this vital issue of Security Council reform.

Finally, I wish to take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, who so ably steered the Open-ended Working Group. We also wish to commend his two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Wilhelm Breitenstein of Finland and Ambassador Chew Tai Soo of Singapore for their intellectual and diplomatic skills and for dedicating many long hours to ensuring that the Working Group made progress.

Mr. Sengwe (Zimbabwe): A few days ago the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe, Mr. Nathan Shamuyarira, conveyed to Mr. Amara Essy of Côte d'Ivoire the felicitations of our delegation on his well-deserved election to the presidency of the General Assembly at this, its forty-ninth session. I echo those sentiments and pledge my delegation's full support and cooperation towards the successful discharge of his mandate.

I should like also to congratulate Ambassador Insanally of Guyana on his sterling conduct of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session and, in particular, on his chairmanship of the Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on the issue before us. Our commendation is due also to the two Vice-Chairmen, Ambassadors Chew Tai Soo of Singapore and Wilhelm Breitenstein of Finland. We thus welcome the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation On and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) has issued an African common position, and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has issued declarations and communiqués stating its position on the issues currently before us. Zimbabwe fully supports and subscribes to these collective positions on the restructuring and reorganization of the Security Council.

As we all know, the Security Council is mandated, under the Charter, with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In an increasingly turbulent world the Council is being called upon to act under increasingly delicate and complex circumstances. Hence, if it is to have greater efficiency and effectiveness it needs to wield greater legitimacy, moral authority and credibility. This is possible only in circumstances of greater transparency and accountability on the part of the Council. In the absence of democracy and equitable representativeness, there can be no transparency or accountability.

Thus any Security Council reform must begin on the premise that the democratic ethic that is now a cause for celebration within our national borders should find expression at the international level too. In this respect, the notion of absolute permanent membership of the Security Council and the attendant veto should now be regarded as relics of a bygone era and should therefore be abolished. Is it not the greatest irony of our times that those who assiduously resist the democratization of relations between nations are the most vocal in insisting on democratic governance within nations?

From the work done so far, it would appear that attainment of the goal of abolishing absolute permanent membership and the veto may be long in coming. Therefore, any transitional arrangements arrived at must seriously address the imbalances and injustices of existing arrangements.

It is quite clear that the geographical distribution of both permanent and non-permanent membership of the Security Council is grossly inequitable. This has to be rectified if the decisions of the Council are to get the stamp of legitimacy that the nature of its mandate requires. However, we believe that, in the interim period, the mandates of any additional members of the Security Council should be subject to periodic review. Nevertheless, for their periods on the Council they should enjoy the same rights and privileges, including the veto, as the existing permanent members. The ultimate goal should continue to be that all members of the Security Council are subject to election. The principle of the consent of the governed is paramount.

We believe that while the institution of the veto lasts, its use should be circumscribed so as to prevent its

unilateral use to promote or protect narrow national interests.

We take note of the limited reforms introduced by the Security Council in recent months. Several representatives have already alluded to these, and we shall not labour the point. However, my delegation believes that these cosmetic reforms should not be seen as substitutes for the more fundamental change that we seek. Towards the conclusion of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly some members suggested in the Working Group that perhaps we needed to formalize the limited changes in working methods that the Security Council has been pressured into introducing. We fear that formalization of otherwise superficial changes could only foster a false sense of accomplishment. Our approach should be that of a comprehensive package - a package that will ensure the creation of a transparent, representative and democratic Security Council.

Mr. Biegman (Netherlands): As the hour is late I shall be brief.

My delegation welcomed the establishment of the Open-ended Working Group on the question before us, and I wish to thank its Chairman, Ambassador Insanally and the Vice-Chairmen, Ambassadors Breitenstein and Chew, for their tireless efforts and laudable contributions in this regard.

The Group's report was extremely short because, despite a convergence of views on many matters, consensus was still far away. Nevertheless, on one point all States Members are agreed: that the Security Council should be enlarged to some extent. This common conviction is in itself an important step forward.

We hope that during this session of the General Assembly the Open-ended Working Group will be able to narrow the differences that still exist and enhance the convergence so that it can come forward with more concrete proposals.

In his speech to the General Assembly the Netherlands Minister of Foreign Affairs outlined a number of priorities and principles which, in the view of my Government, should be respected in the process of reforming the Security Council. Let me briefly repeat the seven most important points for the record.

First, both the composition and the working methods of the Council will have to be changed in order to increase the credibility and legitimacy of the United Nations in general.

Second, as changes in the composition of the Council will require amendments to the Charter, it is logical and desirable that reform of the Council should have the broadest possible support among Member States.

Third, a careful balance must be struck between the effectiveness of the Council and the necessity to enhance its representative character. We hope that consensus can be reached on a total number of seats somewhere in the low twenties.

The President returned to the Chair.

Fourth, the United Nations Charter indicates in Article 23, appropriately, that eligibility for membership in the Council will depend in the first instance on

> "the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and also to equitable geographical distribution."

Fifth, these consequently, should be the criteria for new membership. Without excluding other new members, my country is therefore in favour of the admission of Germany and Japan as permanent members of the Security Council.

Sixth, the Netherlands would, in the context of an enlargement, have no objection in principle to an amendment of paragraph 2 of Article 23 to create the possibility of re-election of Member States in non-permanent seats in the Council.

Seventh, enhanced transparency and closer coordination between the Security Council and the United Nations membership at large is of extreme importance. I wish to stress in this regard the urgent need for an improved flow of information to and consultation with countries participating in peace-keeping operations. We are prepared to participate actively in efforts to establish workable mechanisms in this regard. Such improvements need not wait until the enlargement of the Security Council takes place.

My delegation is looking forward to the continuation of the exchange of views in the Open-ended Working Group during this session of the General Assembly.

Concrete proposals for reforming the Security Council will be evaluated in the light of the foregoing key elements.

The Assembly can count on my delegation's cooperation in finding lasting, equitable and fair solutions that will help the Security Council carry out its important and challenging mandate in an ever- more-complex global context. In the consideration of this agenda item, my country will be guided by a desire to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, credibility and legitimacy of the Security Council in the interest of all United Nations Member States.

Mr. Abiola (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation welcomes the opportunity to participate in this debate on the important question of equitable representation on and increase in membership of the Security Council. Nigeria has always considered that the changes which have occurred on the international scene since the inception of our Organization, and which have crystallized especially since the end of the cold war, seriously warrant a modification in the composition and working methods of the Security Council so that it will be better able to respond effectively to changed and changing circumstances. The United Nations, for which Member States have great expectations and aspirations, would be failing in its duties and out of line with reality if it were unable to take cognizance of the mood of its membership relative to the necessity for democratization and the transparency of its working methods and of the need for this entire membership to be better represented, particularly in the Security Council, the organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security.

In accordance with the preamble of the Charter, which adverts to "We the peoples of the United Nations", the Security Council must truly act and be seen to act on behalf of the peoples of the United Nations.

This is a compelling reason why the restructuring of the Council must remain of primary interest and concern.

In the course of the past year particularly, renewed efforts have been made to address the various considerations which should have an impact on the eventual determination of the form, character and extent of the review process. In this regard, Member States provided viewpoints which enabled the Open-ended Working Group, established by the General Assembly at the forty-eighth session, to begin to address substantively the issues relating to the restructuring of the Council. The outcome of the efforts exerted thus far reveals the complexity and challenges of the review process. It also testifies to the active interest of all Member States on the subject.

In this endeavour, my delegation would like to pay a special tribute to Mr. Samuel Insanally of Guyana, who, in his capacity as President of the General Assembly at the forty-eighth session, chaired the proceedings of the Open-ended Working Group with distinction and effectiveness. He was ably assisted by the Ambassadors of Finland and Singapore.

As a delegation we continue to believe that the restructuring of the Security Council must be undertaken in a holistic rather than a piecemeal manner, since a review must take into account the subjects of permanent and non-permanent membership; the methods of work, including the question of the transparency of the Security Council; and equitable geographical distribution of seats.

In considering the question of representation and an increase in the membership of the Council, one cannot but reiterate the singular absence of African representation in the permanent membership of the Council, despite the continent's 53 Member States. As to the specific question of number, my delegation is flexible but believes that, whatever final figure is reached, it must be consistent with the principle of representativeness and equitable geographical distribution. My delegation does not believe that we should create a status subordinate to that of permanent member, nor do we support the idea of rotating permanent seats. In other words, we recognize and advocate the continuance of the present arrangement of permanent and non-permanent membership only.

All permanent members should enjoy the same status and privileges and assume the responsibilities incumbent on membership. It is our opinion that the criteria for permanent membership on the Council should include such considerations as a country's population, its capacity to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, and its track record, assessed over a period of time, in international peace-keeping and peace-making efforts.

Enough concern has been expressed about the modalities for bringing these changes into effect, including that of amending the relevant provisions of the Charter. My delegation believes that consideration of these modalities should not be used as obstacles to proceeding with the review. Since it has been possible to amend the Charter on previous occasions, we believe that

a subsequent review can adopt a similar procedure. In any case, there is a ground swell of support by the international community for an increase in the membership of the Security Council. All that is required therefore is the political will and commitment on the part of Member States to translate this support into concrete reforms.

It is the hope of my delegation that at the current session an appropriate resolution will be adopted, enabling the Open-ended Working Group to continue its consideration of the question with a view to reaching an early conclusion. We urge Member States to show flexibility in the interest of international peace and security and of equity and justice.

The President *(interpretation from French):* We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

Members will recall that by resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993 the General Assembly decided

> "to establish an Open-ended Working Group to consider all aspects of the question of increase in the membership of the Security Council, and other matters related to the Security Council" *(para. 1)*.

Having been formally established by the General Assembly, the Working Group is a subsidiary organ of the Assembly.

Furthermore, by decision 48/498 of 14 September 1994, the General Assembly decided that the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council should continue its work, taking into account, *inter alia*, the views expressed at the forty-ninth session, and submit a report to the General Assembly before the end of that session.

By the end of this meeting the Assembly will have heard the views expressed by many Member States. It is my understanding that the Assembly wishes to confirm that the Working Group should continue to consider all aspects of the question of increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council.

The Working Group is therefore in a position to continue its work in due course, at a date to be established by mutual agreement following consultations.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 33.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.